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THE PASSING OF KOREA

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THE EMPEROR OF KOREA

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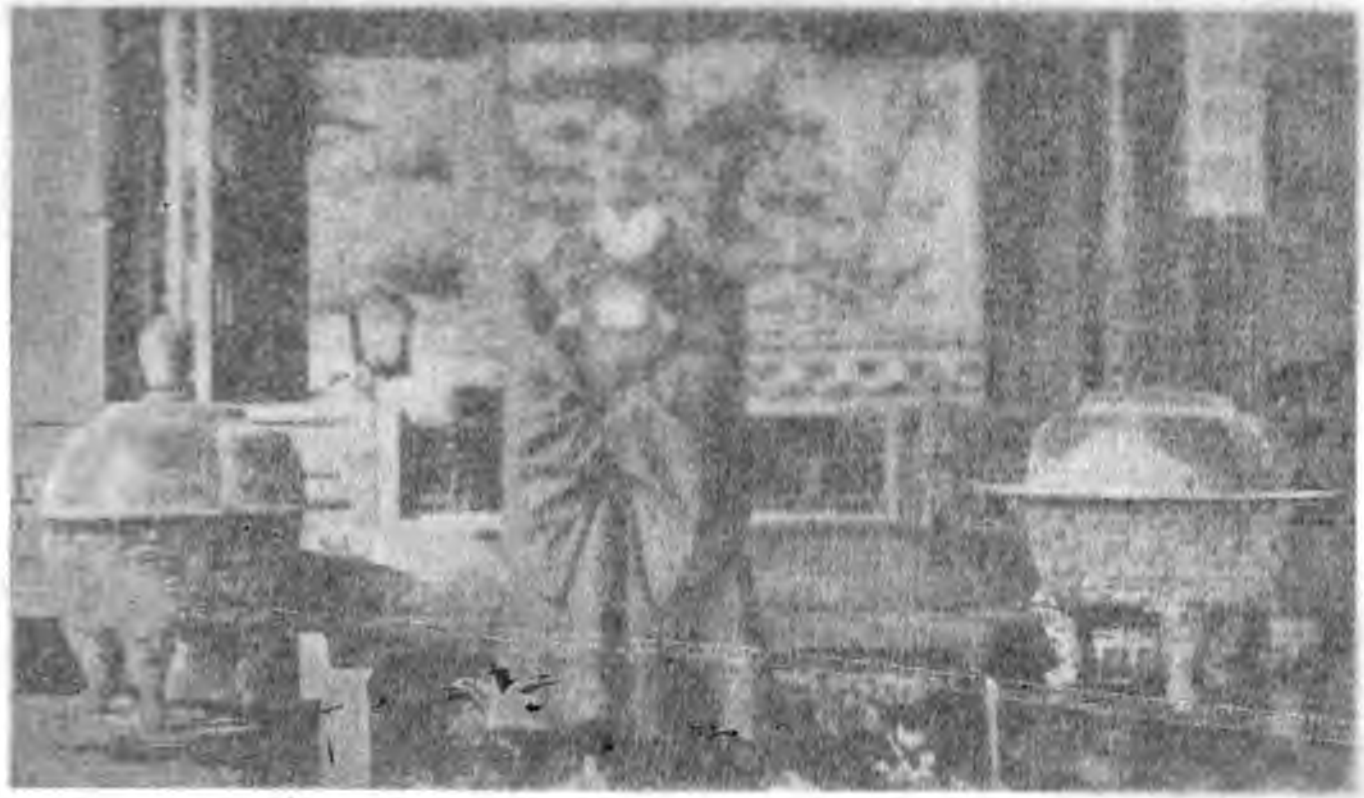

THE EMPEROR OF KOREA

THE PASSING OF KOREA

BY

HOMER B. HULBERT
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AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF KOREA," "COMPARATIVE GRAMMAR OF KOREAN AND DRAVIDIAN," "A SEARCH FOR THE SIBERIAN KLONDIKE," ETC.

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TO HIS MAJESTY

THE EMPEROR OF KOREA

AS A TOKEN OF HIGH ESTEEM AND A PLEDGE OF
UNWAVERING ALLEGIANCE, AT A TIME WHEN
CALUMNY HAS DONE ITS WORST AND
JUSTICE HAS SUFFERED AN ECLIPSE

AND

TO THE KOREAN PEOPLE

WHO ARE NOW WITNESSING THE PASSING OF OLD KOREA
TO GIVE PLACE TO A NEW, WHEN THE SPIRIT OF THE
NATION, QUICKENED BY THE TOUCH OF FIRE,
SHALL HAVE PROVED THAT THOUGH
"SLEEP IS THE IMAGE OF DEATH"
IT IS NOT DEATH ITSELF

PREFACE

MANY excellent books have been written about Korea, each of them approaching the subject from a slightly different angle. In the present volume I have attempted to handle the theme from a more intimate standpoint than that of the casual tourist.

Much that is contained in this present volume is matter that has come under the writer's personal observation or has been derived directly from Koreans or from Korean works. Some of this matter has already appeared in *The Korea Review* and elsewhere. The historical survey is a condensation from the writer's "History of Korea."

This book is a labour of love, undertaken in the days of Korea's distress, with the purpose of interesting the reading public in a country and a people that have been frequently maligned and seldom appreciated. They are overshadowed by China on the one hand in respect of numbers, and by Japan on the other in respect of wit. They are neither good merchants like the one nor good fighters like the other, and yet they are far more like Anglo-Saxons in temperament than either, and they are by far the pleasantest people in the Far East to live amongst. Their failings are such as follow in the wake of ignorance everywhere, and the bettering of their opportunities will bring swift betterment to their condition.

For aid in the compilation of this book my thanks are mainly due to a host of kindly Koreans from every class in society, from the silk-clad yangban to the fettered criminal in prison, from the men who go up the mountains to monasteries to those who go down to the sea in ships.

H. B. H.

NEW YORK, 1906.

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THE PASSING OF KOREA

The Passing of Korea

INTRODUCTORY

THE PROBLEM

THERE is a peculiar pathos in the extinction of a nation. Especially is this true when the nation is one whose history stretches back into the dim centuries until it becomes lost in a labyrinth of myth and legend; a nation which has played an important part in the moulding of other nations and which is filled with monuments of past achievements. Kija, the founder of Korean civilisation, flourished before the reign of David in Jerusalem. In the fifth century after Christ, Korea enjoyed a high degree of civilisation, and was the repository from which the half-savage tribes of Japan drew their first impetus toward culture. As time went on Japan was so fortunate as to become split up into numerous semi-independent baronies, each under the control of a so-called Daimyo or feudal baron. This resulted, as feudalism everywhere has done, in the development of an intense personal loyalty to an overlord, which is impossible in a large state. If one were to examine the condition of European states to-day, he would find that they are enlightened just in proportion as the feudal idea was worked out to its ultimate issues, and wherever, as in southern Europe, the centrifugal power of feudalism was checked by the centripetal power of ecclesiasticism one finds a lower grade of enlightenment, education and genuine liberty. In other words, the feudal system is a chrysalis state from which a people are prepared to leap into the full light of free self-government. Neither China nor Korea has enjoyed that state, and it is therefore manifestly impossible for them to effect any such startling change as that which transformed Japan in a

single decade from a cruel and bigoted exclusiveness to an open and enthusiastic world-life. Instead of bursting forth full-winged from a cocoon, both China and Korea must be incubated like an egg.

It is worth while asking whether the ultimate results of a slow and laborious process like this may not in the end bring forth a product superior in essential respects to that which follows the almost magical rise of modern Japan; or, to carry out the metaphor, whether the product of an egg is not likely to be of greater value than that of a cocoon. In order to a clear understanding of the situation it will be necessary to follow out this question to a definite answer. The world has been held entranced by the splendid military and naval achievements of Japan, and it is only natural that her signal capacity in war should have argued a like capacity along all lines. This has led to various forms of exaggeration, and it becomes the American citizen to ask the question just what part Japan is likely to play in the development of the Far East. One must study the factors of the problem in a judicial spirit if he would arrive at the correct answer. The bearing which this has upon Korea will appear in due course.

When in 1868 the power of the Mikado or Emperor of Japan had been vindicated in a sanguinary war against many of the feudal barons, the Shogunate was done away with once for all, and the act of centralising the government of Japan was complete. But in order to guard against insurrection it was deemed wise to compel all the barons to take up their residence in Tokyo, where they could be watched. This necessitated the disbanding of the samurai or retainers of the barons. These samurai were at once the soldiers and the scholars of Japan. In one hand they held the sword and in the other a book; not as in medieval Europe, where the knights could but rarely read and write and where literature was almost wholly confined to the monasteries. This concentration of physical and intellectual power in the single class called samurai gave them

far greater prestige among the people at large than was ever enjoyed by any set of men in any other land, and it consequently caused a wider gulf between the upper and lower classes than elsewhere, for the samurai shared with no one the fear and the admiration of the common people. The lower classes cringed before them as they passed, and a samurai could wantonly kill a man of low degree almost without fear of consequences.

When the barons were called up to Tokyo, the samurai were disbanded and were forbidden to wear the two swords which had always been their badge of office. This brought them face to face with the danger of falling to the ranks of the lower people, a fate that was all the more terrible because of the absurd height to which in their pride they had elevated themselves.

At this precise juncture they were given a glimpse of the West, with its higher civilisation and its more carefully articulated system of political and social life. With the very genius of despair they grasped the fact that if Japan should adopt the system of the West all government positions, whether diplomatic, consular, constabulary, financial, educational or judicial, whether military or civil, would naturally fall to them, and thus *they would be saved from falling to the plane of the common people.* Here, stripped of all its glamour of romance, is the vital underlying cause of Japan's wonderful metamorphosis. With a very few significant exceptions it was a purely selfish movement, conceived in the interests of caste distinction and propagated in anything but an altruistic spirit. The central government gladly seconded this proposition, for it immediately obviated the danger of constant disaffection and rebellion and welded the state together as nothing else could have done. The personal fealty which the samurai had reposed in his overlord was transferred, almost intact, to the central government, and to-day constitutes a species of national pride which, in the absence of the finer quality, constitutes the Japanese form of patriotism.

From that day to this the wide distinction between the upper

and lower classes in Japan has been maintained. In spite of the fact of so-called popular or representative government, there can be no doubt that class distinctions are more vitally active in Japan than in China, and there is a wider social gap between them than anywhere else in the Far East, with the exception of India, where Brahmanism has accentuated caste. The reason for this lies deep in the Japanese character. When he adopted Western methods, it was in a purely utilitarian spirit. He gave no thought to the principles on which our civilisation is based. It was the finished product he was after and not the process. He judged, and rightly, that energy and determination were sufficient to the donning of the habiliments of the West, and he paid no attention to the forces by which those habiliments were shaped and fitted. The position of woman has experienced no change at all commensurate with Japan's material transformation. Religion in the broadest sense is less in evidence than before the change, for, although the intellectual stimulus of the West has freed the upper classes from the inanities of the Buddhistic cult, comparatively few of them have consented to accept the substitute. Christianity has made smaller advances in Japan than in Korea herself, and everything goes to prove that Japan, instead of digging until she struck the spring of Western culture, merely built a cistern in which she stored up some of its more obvious and tangible results. This is shown in the impatience with which many of the best Japanese regard the present failure to amalgamate the borrowed product with the real underlying genius of Japanese life. It is one constant and growing incongruity. And, indeed, if we look at it rationally, would it not be a doubtful compliment to Western culture if a nation like Japan could absorb its intrinsic worth and enjoy its essential quality without passing through the long-centuried struggle through which we ourselves have attained to it? No more can we enter into the subtleties of an Oriental cult by a quick though intense study of its tenets. The self-conscious babblings of a Madam Blavatsky can be no less ludicrous to

an Oriental Pundit than are the efforts of Japan to vindicate her claim to Western culture without passing through the furnace which made that culture sterling.

The highest praise must be accorded to the earnestness and devotion of Christian missionaries in Japan, but it is a fact deeply to be regretted that the results of their work are so closely confined to the upper classes. This fact throws light upon the statement that there is a great gap between the upper and lower classes there. Even as we are writing, word comes from a keenly observant traveller in Japan that everywhere the Buddhist temples are undergoing repairs.

It is difficult to foresee what the resultant civilisation of Japan will be. There is nothing final as yet, nor have the conflicting forces indicated along what definite lines the intense nationalism of the Japanese will develop.

But let us look at the other side of the picture. Here is China, and with her Korea, for they are essentially one in general temper. They cling with intense loyalty to the past. They are thoroughly conservative. Now, how will you explain it? Some would say that it is pure obstinacy, a wilful blindness, an intellectual coma, a moral obsession. This is the easiest, and superficially the most logical, explanation. It saves time and trouble; and, after all, what does it matter? It matters much every way. It does not become us to push the momentous question aside because those people are contemptible. Four hundred millions are saved from contempt by their very numbers. There is an explanation, and a rational one.

One must not forget that these people are possessed of a social system that has been worked out through long centuries, and to such fine issues that every individual has his set place and value. The system is comprehensive, consistent and homogeneous. It differs widely from ours, but has sufficed to hold those peoples together and give them a national life of wonderful tenacity. There must be something in the system fundamentally good, or else it would not have held

together for all these centuries with comparatively so little modification.

We have seen how the Japanese were shaken out of their long-centuried sleep by a happy combination of circumstances. There are doubtless possible combinations which might similarly affect China and Korea, but the difference in temperament between them and the Japanese renders it highly improbable that we shall ever see anything so spectacular as that which occurred in Japan. No two cults were ever more dissimilar than Confucianism and Buddhism; and if we were to condense into a single sentence the reason why China and Korea can never follow Japan's example it would be this: that the Chinese and Korean temperament followed the materialistic bent of Confucianism, while the Japanese followed the idealistic bent of Buddhism.

Now, what if the West, instead of merely lending its superficial integuments to China and Korea, should leave all the harmless and inconsequential customs of those lands intact, and should attempt instead to reach down to some underlying moral and fundamental principle and begin a transformation from within, working outward; if, instead of carrying on campaigns against pinched feet and infanticide, we should strike straight at the root of the matter, and by giving them the secret of Western culture make it possible for them to evolve a new civilisation embodying all the culture of the West, but expressed in terms of Oriental life and habit? Here would be an achievement to be proud of, for it would prove that our culture *is* fundamental, and that it does not depend for its vindication upon the mere vestments of Western life.

And herein lies the pathos of Korea's position; for, lying as she does in the grip of Japan, she cannot gain from that power more than that power is capable of giving — nothing more than the garments of the West. She may learn science and industrial arts, but she will use them only as a parrot uses human speech. There are American gentlemen in Korea who could lead you to country villages in that land where the fetich

shrines have been swept away, where schools and churches have been built, and where the transforming power of Christianity has done a fundamental work without touching a single one of the time-honoured customs of the land; where hard-handed farmers have begun in the only genuine way to develop the culture of the West. That culture evinces itself in its ultimate forms of honesty, sympathy, unselfishness, and not in the use of a swallow-tail coat and a silk hat. Which, think you, is the proper way to go about the rehabilitation of the East? The only yellow peril possible lies in the arming of the Orient with the thunder-bolts of the West, without at the same time giving her the moral forces which will restrain her in their use.

The American public has been persistently told that the Korean people are a degenerate and contemptible nation, incapable of better things, intellectually inferior, and better off under Japanese rule than independent. The following pages may in some measure answer these charges, which have been put forth for a specific purpose, — a purpose that came to full fruition on the night of November 17, 1905, when, at the point of the sword, Korea was forced to acquiesce "voluntarily" in the virtual destruction of her independence once for all. The reader will here find a narrative of the course of events which led up to this crisis, and the part that different powers, including the United States, played in the tragedy.

CHAPTER I

WHERE AND WHAT KOREA IS ABOVE AND BELOW GROUND

NEAR the eastern coast of Asia, at the forty-fourth parallel of latitude, we find a whorl of mountains culminating in a peak which Koreans call White Head Mountain. From this centre mountain ranges radiate in three directions, one of them going southward and forming the backbone of the Korean peninsula. The watershed is near the eastern coast, and as the range runs southward it gradually diminishes in height until at last it is lost in the sea, and there, with its base in the water, it lifts its myriad heads to the surface, and confers upon the ruler of Korea the deserved title of "King of Ten Thousand Islands." A very large part of the arable land of Korea lies on its western side; all the long and navigable rivers are there or in the south; almost all the harbours are on the Yellow Sea. For this reason we may say that topographically Korea lies with her face toward China and her back toward Japan. This has had much to do in determining the history of the country. Through all the centuries she has set her face toward the west, and never once, though under the lash of foreign invasion and threatened extinction, has she ever swerved from her allegiance to her Chinese ideal. Lacordaire said of Ireland that she has remained "free by the soul." So it may be said of Korea, that, although forced into Japan's arms, she has remained "Chinese by the soul."

The climate of Korea may be briefly described as the same as that of the eastern part of the United States between Maine and South Carolina, with this one difference, that the prevailing southeast summer wind in Korea brings the moisture from

the warm ocean current that strikes Japan from the south, and precipitates it over almost the whole of Korea; so that there is a distinct "rainy season" during most of the months of July and August. This rainy season also has played an important part in determining Korean history. Unfortunately for navigation, the western side of the peninsula, where most of the good harbours are found, is visited by very high tides, and the rapid currents which sweep among the islands make this the most dangerous portion of the Yellow Sea. On the eastern coast a cold current flows down from the north, and makes both summer and winter cooler than on the western side.

Though the surface of Korea is essentially mountainous, it resembles Japan very little, for the peninsula lies outside the line of volcanoes which are so characteristic of the island empire. Many of the Korean mountains are evidently extinct volcanoes, especially White Head Mountain, in whose extinct crater now lies a lake. Nor does Korea suffer at all from earthquakes. The only remnants of volcanic action that survive are the occasional hot springs. The peninsula is built for the most part on a granite foundation, and the bare hill-tops, which appear everywhere, and are such an unwelcome contrast to the foliage-smothered hills of Japan, are due to the disintegration of the granite and the erosion of the water during the rainy season. But there is much besides granite in Korea. There are large sections where slate prevails, and it is in these sections that the coal deposits are found, both anthracite and bituminous. It is affirmed by the Korean people that gold is found in every one of the three hundred and sixty-five prefectures of the country. This doubtless is an exaggeration, but it is near enough the truth to indicate that Korea is essentially a granite formation, for gold is found, of course, only in connection with such formation. Remarkably beautiful sandstones, marbles and other building stones are met with among the mountains; and one town in the south is celebrated for its production of rock crystal, which is used extensively in making spectacle lenses.

The scenery of Korea as witnessed from the deck of a steamer is very uninviting, and it is this which has sent so many travellers home to assert that this country is a barren, treeless waste. There is no doubt that the scarcity of timber along most of the beaten highways of Korea is a certain blemish, though there are trees in moderate number everywhere; but this very absence of extensive forests gives to the scenery a grandeur and repose which is not to be found in Japanese scenery. The lofty crags that lift their heads three thousand feet into the air and almost overhang the city of Seoul are alpine in their grandeur. There is always distance, openness, sweep to a Korean view which is quite in contrast to the picturesque coziness of almost all Japanese scenery. This, together with the crystal atmosphere, make Korea, even after only a few years' residence, a delightful reminiscence. No people surpass the Koreans in love for and appreciation of beautiful scenery. Their literature is full of it. Their nature poems are gems in their way. Volumes have been written describing the beauties of special scenes, and Korea possesses a geography, nearly five hundred years old, in which the beauties of each separate prefecture are described in minute detail, so that it constitutes a complete historical and scenic guide-book of the entire country.

The vegetable life of Korea is like that of other parts of the temperate zone, but there is a striking preponderance of a certain kind of pine, the most graceful of its tribe. It forms a conspicuous element in every scene. The founder of the dynasty preceding the present one called his capital Song-do, or Pine Tree Capital. It is a constant theme in Korean art, and plays an important part in legend and folk-lore in general. Being an evergreen, it symbolises eternal existence. There are ten things which Koreans call the *chang sang pul sa,* or "long-lived and deathless." They are the pine-tree, tortoise, rock, stag, cloud, sun, moon, stork, water and a certain moss or lichen named "the ageless plant." Pine is practically the only wood used in building either houses, boats, bridges or any other

structure. In poetry and imaginative prose it corresponds to the oak of Western literature. Next in importance is the bamboo, which, though growing only in the southern provinces, is used throughout the land and in almost every conceivable way. The domestic life of the Korean would be thrown into dire confusion were the bamboo to disappear. Hats are commonly made of it, and it enters largely, if not exclusively, into the construction of fans, screens, pens, pipes, tub-hoops, flutes, lanterns, kites, bows and a hundred other articles of daily use. Take the bamboo out of Korean pictorial art and half the pictures in the land would be ruined. From its shape it is the symbol of grace, and from its straightness and the regular occurrence of its nodes it is the symbol of faithfulness. The willow is one of the most conspicuous trees, for it usually grows in the vicinity of towns, where it has been planted by the hand of man. Thus it becomes the synonym of peace and contentment. The mighty row of willows near Pyeng-yang in the north is believed to have been planted by the great sage and coloniser Kija in 1122 B. C., his purpose being to influence the semi-savage people by this object-lesson. From that time to this Pyeng-yang has been known in song and story as "The Willow Capital." As the pine is the symbol of manly vigour and strength, so the willow is the synonym of womanly beauty and grace. Willow wood, because of its lightness, is used largely in making the clumsy wooden shoes which are worn exclusively in wet weather; and chests are made of it when lightness is desirable. The willow sprays are used in making baskets of all kinds, so that this tree is, in many ways, quite indispensable. Another useful wood is called the paktal. It has been erroneously called the sandal-wood, which it resembles in no particular. It is very like the iron-wood of America, and is used in making the laundering clubs, tool handles, and other utensils which require great hardness and durability. It was under a paktal-tree that the fabled sage Tangun was found seated some twenty-three hundred years before Christ; so it holds a peculiar place in

Korean esteem. As the pine was the dynastic symbol of Koryu, 918–1392, so the plum-tree is the symbol of this present dynasty. It was chosen because the Chinese character for plum is the same as that of the family name of the reigning house. It was for this cogent reason that the last king of the Koryu dynasty planted plum-trees on the prophetic site of the present capital, and then destroyed them all, hoping thereby to blight the prospects of the Yi family, who, prophecy declared, would become masters of the land.

There are many hard woods in Korea that are used in the arts and industries of the people. Oak, ginko, elm, beech and other species are found in considerable numbers, but the best cabinet woods are imported from China. An important tree, found mostly in the southern provinces, is the paper-mulberry, *broussonetai papyrifera,* the inner bark of which is used exclusively in making the tough paper used by Koreans in almost every branch of life. It is celebrated beyond the borders of the peninsula, and for centuries formed an important item in the annual tribute to China and in the official exchange of goods with Japan. It is intrinsically the same as the superb Japanese paper, though of late years the Japanese have far surpassed the Koreans in its manufacture. The cedar is not uncommon in the country, but its wood is used almost exclusively for incense in the Buddhist monasteries. Box-wood is used for making seals and in the finer processes of the xylographic art, but for this latter purpose pear-wood is most commonly substituted.

Korea is richly endowed with fruits of almost every kind common to the temperate zone, with the exception of the apple. Persimmons take a leading place, for this is the one fruit that grows to greater perfection in this country than in any other place. They grow to the size of an ordinary apple, and after the frost has touched them they are a delicacy that might be sought for in vain on the tables of royalty in the West. The apricot, while of good flavour, is smaller than the European

or American product. The peaches are of a deep red colour throughout and are of good size, but are not of superior quality. Plums are plentiful and of fair quality. A sort of bush cherry is one of the commonest of Korean fruits, but it is not grown by grafting and is inferior in every way. Jujubes, pomegranates, crab-apples, pears and grapes are common, but are generally insipid to Western taste. Foreign apples, grapes, pears, peaches, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, currants and other garden fruits grow to perfection in this soil. As for nuts, the principal kinds are the so-called English walnuts, chestnuts and pine nuts. We find also ginko and other nuts, but they amount to very little.

The question of cereals is, of course, of prime importance. The Korean people passed immediately from a savage condition to the status of an agricultural community without the intervention of a pastoral age. They have never known anything about the uses of milk or any of its important products, excepting as medicine. Even the primitive legends do not antedate the institution of agriculture in the peninsula. Rice was first introduced from China in 1122 B. C., but millet had already been grown here for many centuries. Rice forms the staple article of food of the vast majority of the Korean people. In the northern and eastern provinces the proportion of other grains is more considerable, and in some few places rice is hardly eaten at all; but the fact remains that, with the exception of certain mountainous districts where the construction of paddy-fields is out of the question, rice is the main article of food of the whole nation. The history of the introduction and popularisation of this cereal and the stories and poems that have been written about it would make a respectable volume. The Korean language has almost as many synonyms for it as the Arabic has for horse. It means more to him than roast beef does to an Englishman, macaroni to an Italian, or potatoes to an Irishman. There are three kinds of rice in Korea. One is grown in the water, another in ordinary fields, and another

still on the sides of hills. The last is a smaller and harder variety, and is much used in stocking military granaries, for it will last eight or ten years without spoiling. The great enemies of rice are drought, flood, worms, locusts, blight and wind. The extreme difficulty of keeping paddy-fields in order in such a hilly country, the absolute necessity of having rains at a particular time and of not having it at others, the great labour of transplanting and constant cultivation, — all these things conspire to make the production of rice an incubus upon the Korean people. Ask a Louisiana rice-planter how he would like to cultivate the cereal in West Virginia, and you will discover what it means in Korea. But in spite of all the difficulties, the Korean clings to his favourite dish, and out of a hundred men who have saved up a little money ninety-nine will buy rice-fields as being the safest investment. Korean poetry teems with allusions to this seemingly prosaic cereal. The following is a free translation of a poem referring to the different species of rice:

The earth, the fresh warm earth, by heaven's decree,
Was measured out, mile beyond mile afar;
The smiling face which Chosun first upturned
Toward the o'er-arching sky is dimpled still
With that same smile; and nature's kindly law,
In its unchangeability, rebukes
The fickle fashions of the thing called Man.
The mountain grain retains its ancient shape,
Long-waisted, hard and firm; the rock-ribbed hills,
On which it grows, both form and fibre yield.
The lowland grain still sucks the fatness up
From the rich fen, and delves for gold wherewith
To deck itself for Autumn's carnival.
Alas for that rude swain who nothing recks
Of nature's law, and casts his seedling grain
Or here or there regardless of its kind.
For him the teeming furrow gapes in vain
And dowers his granaries with emptiness.
To north and south the furrowed mountains stretch,
A wolf gigantic, crouching to his rest.
To east and west the streams, like serpents lithe,
Glide down to seek a home beneath the sea.

The South — warm mother of the race — pours out
Her wealth in billowy floods of grain. The North —
Stern foster-mother — yields her scanty store
By hard compulsion; makes her children pay
For bread by mintage of their brawn and blood.

Millet is the most ancient form of food known in Korea, and it still forms the staple in most places where rice will not grow. There are many varieties of millet, all of which flourish luxuriantly in every province. It is a supplementary crop, in that it takes the place of rice when there is a shortage in that cereal owing to drought or other cause. Barley is of great importance, because it matures the earliest in the season, and so helps the people tide over a period of scarcity. A dozen varieties of beans are produced, some of which are eaten in connection with rice, and others are fed to the cattle. Beans form one of the most important exports of the country. Wheat is produced in considerable quantities in the northern provinces. Sesamum, sorghum, oats, buckwheat, linseed, corn and a few other grains are found, but in comparatively small quantities.

As rice is the national dish, we naturally expect to find various condiments to go with it. Red-peppers are grown everywhere, and a heavy kind of lettuce is used in making the favourite sauerkraut, or *kimchi*, whose proximity is detected without the aid of the eye. Turnips are eaten raw or pickled. A kind of water-cress called *minari* plays a secondary part among the side dishes. In the summer the people revel in melons and canteloupes, which they eat entire or imperfectly peeled, and even the presence of cholera hardly calls a halt to this dangerous indulgence. Potatoes have long been known to the Koreans, and in a few mountain sections they form the staple article of diet. They are of good quality, and are largely eaten by foreign residents in the peninsula. Onions and garlic abound, and among the well-to-do mushrooms of several varieties are eaten. Dandelions, spinach and a great variety of salads help the rice to "go down."

Korea is celebrated throughout the East for its medicinal plants, among which ginseng, of course, takes the leading place. The Chinese consider the Korean ginseng far superior to any other. It is of two kinds, — the mountain ginseng, which is so rare and precious that the finding of a single root once in three seasons suffices the finder for a livelihood; and the ordinary cultivated variety, which differs little from that found in the woods in America. The difference is that in Korea it is carefully cultivated for six or seven years, and then after being gathered it is put through a steaming process which gives it a reddish tinge. This makes it more valuable in Chinese esteem, and it sells readily at high prices. It is a government monopoly, and nets something like three hundred thousand yen a year. Liquorice root, castor beans and scores of other plants that figure in the Western pharmacopœia are produced, together with many that the Westerner would eschew.

The Koreans are great lovers of flowers, though comparatively few have the means to indulge this taste. In the spring the hills blush red with rhododendrons and azaleas, and the ground in many places is covered with a thick mat of violets. The latter are called the "savage flower," for the lobe is supposed to resemble the Manchu queue, and to the Korean every Manchu is a savage. The wayside bushes are festooned with clematis and honeysuckle, the alternate white and yellow blossoms of the latter giving it the name "gold and silver flower." The lily-of-the-valley grows riotously in the mountain dells, and daffodils and anemones abound. The commonest garden flower is the purple iris, and many official compounds have ponds in which the lotus grows. The people admire branches of peach, plum, apricot or crab-apple as yet leafless but covered with pink and white flowers. The pomegranate, snowball, rose, hydrangea, chrysanthemum and many varieties of lily figure largely among the favourites. It is pathetic to see in the cramped and unutterably filthy quarters of the very poor an effort being made to keep at least one plant

THE FAITHFUL FUEL-CARRIERS OF KOREA

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alive. There is hardly a hut in Seoul where no flower is found.

As for animal life, Korea has a generous share. The magnificent bullocks which carry the heavy loads, draw the carts and pull the ploughs are the most conspicuous. It is singular that the Koreans have never used milk or any of its products, though the cow has existed in the peninsula for at least thirty-five hundred years. This is one of the proofs that the Koreans have never been a nomadic people. Without his bullock the farmer would be all at sea. No other animal would be able to drag a plough through the adhesive mud of a paddy-field. Great mortality among cattle, due to pleuro-pneumonia, not infrequently becomes the main cause of a famine. There are no oxen in Korea. Most of the work is done with bullocks, which are governed by a ring through the nose and are seldom obstreperous. Every road in Korea is rendered picturesque by long lines of bullocks carrying on their backs huge loads of fuel in the shape of grass, fagots of wood or else fat bags of rice and barley. As might be expected, cowhides are an important article of export.

The Korean pony is unique, at least in Eastern Asia. It is a little larger than the Shetland pony, but is less heavily built. Two thousand years ago, it is said, men could ride these animals under the branches of the fruit trees without lowering the head. They differ widely from the Manchu or Japanese horse, and appear to be indigenous — unless we may believe the legend that when the three sages arose from a fissure in the ground in the island of Quelpart three thousand years ago, each of them found a chest floating in from the south and containing a colt, a calf, a pig, a dog and a wife. The pony is not used in ploughing or drawing a cart, for it is not heavy enough for such work, but it is used under the pack and under the saddle, frequently under both, for often the traveller packs a huge bundle on the pony and then seats himself on top, so that the animal forms but a vulgar fraction of the whole

ensemble. Foreigners of good stature frequently have to raise the feet from the stirrup when riding along stony roads. Yet these insignificant beasts are tough and long-suffering, and will carry more than half their own weight thirty-five miles a day, week in and week out.

As in all Eastern countries, the pig is a ubiquitous social factor. We use the word "social" advisedly, for in country villages at least this animal is always visible, and frequently under foot. It is a small black breed, and is so poorly fed as to have practically no lateral development, but resembles the "razorbacks" of the mountain districts of Tennessee. Its attenuated shape is typical of the concentrated character of its porcine obstinacy, as evidenced in the fact that the shrewd Korean farmer prefers to tie up his pig and carry it to market on his own back rather than drive it on foot.

Korea produces no sheep. The entire absence of this animal, except as imported for sacrificial purposes, confirms the supposition that the Koreans have never been a pastoral people. Foreigners have often wondered why they do not keep sheep and let them graze on the uncultivable hillsides which form such a large portion of the area of the country. The answer is manifold. Tigers, wolves and bears would decimate the flocks. All arable land is used for growing grain, and what grass is cut is all consumed as fuel. It would therefore be impossible to winter the sheep. Furthermore, an expert sheep man, after examining the grasses common on the Korean hillsides, told the writer that sheep could not eat them. The turf about grave sites and a few other localities would make good grazing for sheep, but it would be quite insufficient to feed any considerable number even in summer.

The donkey is a luxury in Korea, being used only by well-to-do countrymen in travelling. Its bray is out of all proportion to its size, and one really wonders how its frame survives the wrench of that fearful blast.

Reputable language is hardly adequate to the description of

SHOEING A BULL

the Korean dog. No family would be complete without one; but its bravery varies inversely as the square of its vermin, which is calculable in no known terms. This dog is a wolfish breed, but thoroughly domesticated. Almost every house has a hole in the front door for his accommodation. He will lie just inside, with his head protruding from the orifice and his eyes rolling from side to side in the most truculent manner. If he happens to be outside and you point your finger at him, he rushes for this hole, and bolts through it at a pace which seems calculated to tear off all the hair from his prominent angles. Among certain of the poorer classes the flesh of the dog is eaten, and we have in mind a certain shop in Seoul where the purveying of this delicacy is a specialty. We once shot a dog which entertained peculiar notions about the privacy of our back yard. The gateman disposed of the remains in a mysterious manner and then retired on the sick-list for a few days. When he reappeared at last, with a weak smile on his face he placed his hand on his stomach and affirmed with evident conviction that some dogs are too old for any use. But, on the whole, the Korean dog is cleared of the charge of uselessness by the fact that he acts as scavenger in general, and really does much to keep the city from becoming actually uninhabitable.

The cat is almost exclusively of the back-fence variety, and is an incorrigible thief. It is the natural prey of the ubiquitous dog and the small boy. Our observation leads us to the sad but necessary conclusion that old age stands at the very bottom of the list of causes of feline mortality.

So much for domestic animals. Of wild beasts the tiger takes the lead. The general notion that this animal is found only in tropical or semi-tropical countries is a mistake. The colder it is and the deeper the snow, the more he will be in evidence in Korea. Country villages frequently have a tiger trap of logs at each end of the main street, and in the winter time these are baited with a live animal, — pig for choice. The tiger

attains a good size, and its hair is thick and long. We have seen skins eleven and a half feet long, with hair two inches and more in length. This ugly beast will pass through the streets of a village at night in the dead of winter, and the people are fortunate if he does not break in a door and carry away a child. No record is kept of the mortality from this cause, but it is probable that a score or more of people perish annually in this way. Legend and story are full of the ravages of the tiger. He is supposed to be able to imitate the human voice, and thus lure people out of their houses at night. Koreans account for the fierceness of his nature by saying that in the very beginning of things the Divine Being offered a bear and a tiger the opportunity of becoming men if they would endure certain tests. The bear passed the examination with flying colours, but the tiger succumbed to the trial of patience, and so went forth the greatest enemy of man.

Deer are common throughout the land, and at the proper season they are eagerly sought for because of their soft horns, which are considered of great medicinal value. Wealthy Koreans who are ailing often go among the mountains with the hope of being in at the death of a young buck, and securing a long draught of the warm blood, which they look upon as nearly equivalent to the fountain of eternal youth. The exercise required for this is in itself enough to make an ill man well, so the fiction about the blood is not only innocent but valuable.

The bear is found occasionally, but is of a small breed and does comparatively little damage. The wild boar is a formidable animal, and is considered fully as dangerous to meet as the tiger, because it will charge a supposed enemy at sight. We have seen specimens weighing well toward four hundred pounds and with formidable tushes. The fox is found in every town and district in the country. It is the most detested of all things. It is the epitome of treachery, meanness and sin. The land is full of stories of evil people who turned out to be foxes in the disguise of human form. And of all foxes the white one is the worst,

but it is doubtful whether such has ever been seen in Korea. Tradition has no more opprobrious epithet than "fox." Even the tiger is less dangerous, because less crafty. The wolf is comparatively little known, but occasionally news comes from some distant town that a child has been snatched away by a wolf. The leopard is another supposedly tropical animal that flourishes in this country. Its skin is more largely used than that of the tiger, but only officials of high rank are allowed the luxury.

Among lesser animals are found the badger, hedgehog, squirrel, wildcat, otter, weasel and sable. The last is highly prized for its skin, but it is of poorer quality than that of the Siberian sable. At the same time many handsome specimens have been picked up here. The Koreans value most highly the small spot of yellow or saffron that is found under the throat of the sable. We have seen whole garments made of an almost countless number of such pieces. Naturally it takes a small fortune to acquire one of them.

For its bird life, especially game birds, Korea is deservedly famous. First comes the huge bustard, which stands about four feet high and weighs, when dressed, from twenty to thirty pounds. It is much like the wild turkey, but is larger and gamier. The beautiful Mongolian pheasant is found everywhere in the country, and in winter it is so common in the market that it brings only half the price of a hen. Within an hour of Seoul one can find excellent pheasant shooting at the proper season. Ducks of a dozen varieties, geese, swan and other aquatic birds abound in such numbers that one feels as if he were taxing the credulity of the reader in describing them. In the winter of 1891 the ducks migrated apparently in one immense flock. Their approach sounded like the coming of a cyclone, and as they passed, the sky was completely shut out from view. It would have been impossible to get a rifle bullet between them. They do not often migrate this way, but flocks of them can be seen in all directions at almost any time of day during the season. Even

as we write, information comes that a party of three men returned from two days' shooting with five hundred and sixty pounds of birds. Quail, snipe and other small birds are found in large quantities, but the hunter scorns them in view of the larger game. Various kinds of storks, cranes and herons find abundance of food in the flooded paddy-fields, where no one thinks of disturbing them. One of the sights of Seoul is its airy scavengers, the hawks, who may be seen sometimes by the score sailing about over the town. Now and again one of them will sweep down and seize a piece of meat from a bowl that a woman is carrying home on her head. It is not uncommon to see small boys throwing dead mice into the air to see the hawks swoop down and seize them before they reach the ground.

Korea contains plenty of snakes, but none of them are specially venomous, although there are some whose bite will cause considerable irritation. Many snakes live among the tiles of the roofs, where they subsist on the sparrows that make their nests under the eaves. These snakes are harmless fellows, and when you see one hanging down over your front door in the dusk of evening it should cause no alarm. The people say, and believe it too, that if a snake lives a thousand years it assumes a short and thick shape and acquires wings, with which it flies about with inconceivable rapidity, and is deadly not only because of its bite, but if a person even feels the wind caused by its lightning flash as it speeds by he will instantly die. Formerly, according to Korean tradition, there were no snakes in Korea; but when the wicked ruler Prince Yunsan (1495–1506) had worn himself out with a life of excesses, he desired to try the effect of keeping a nest of snakes under his bed, for he had heard that this would restore lost vitality. So he sent a boat to India, and secured a cargo of selected ophidians, and had them brought to Korea. The cargo was unloaded at Asan; but it appears that the stevedores had not been accustomed to handle this kind of freight, and so a part of the reptiles made their escape into the woods. From that time, so goes the tale, snakes have existed

here as elsewhere. Unfortunately no one has ever made a study of serpent worship in Korea, but there appears to be some reason to believe that there was once such a cult. The Koreans still speak of the *op-kuregi,* or "Good Fortune Serpent"; and as most of the natives have little other religion than that of praying to all kinds of spirits for good luck, it can hardly be doubted that the worship of the serpent in some form has existed in Korea.

Though there are no deadly snakes in the country, there are insects that annually cause considerable loss of life. The centipede attains a growth of six or seven inches, and a bite from one of them may prove fatal, if not attended to at once. The Koreans cut up centipedes and make a deadly drink, which they use, as hemlock was used in Greece, for executing criminals. This has now gone out of practice, however, thanks to the enlightening contact with Westerners, who simply choke a man to death with a rope! Among the mountains it is said that a poisonous spider is found; but until this is verified we dare not vouch for it.

The tortoise plays an important part in Korean legend and story. He represents to the Korean mind the principle of healthy conservatism. He is never in a hurry, and perhaps this is why the Koreans look upon him with such respect, if not affection. All animals in Korea are classed as good or bad. We have already said that the fox is the worst. The tiger, boar, frog and mouse follow. These are all bad; but the bear, deer, tortoise, cow and rabbit are all good animals.

More important than all these, except cattle, are the fish of Korea. The waters about the peninsula swarm with fish of a hundred kinds. They are all eaten by the people, even the sharks and the octopi. The commonest is the ling, which is caught in enormous numbers off the east coast, and sent all over the country in the dried form. Various kinds of clams, oysters and shrimps are common. Whales are so numerous off the eastern coast that a flourishing Japanese company has been employed in catching them of late years. Pearl oysters are found in large numbers along the southern coast, and the pearls would be of considerable

value if the Koreans knew how to abstract them from the shells in a proper manner.

But fish and pearls are not the only sea-products that the Korean utilises. Enormous quantities of edible seaweed are gathered, and the sea-slug, or beche-de-mer, is a particular delicacy. The Koreans make no use of those bizarre dishes for which the Chinese are so noted, such as birds' nests and the like. Their only prandial eccentricity is boiled dog, and that is strictly confined to the lowest classes.

CHAPTER II

THE PEOPLE

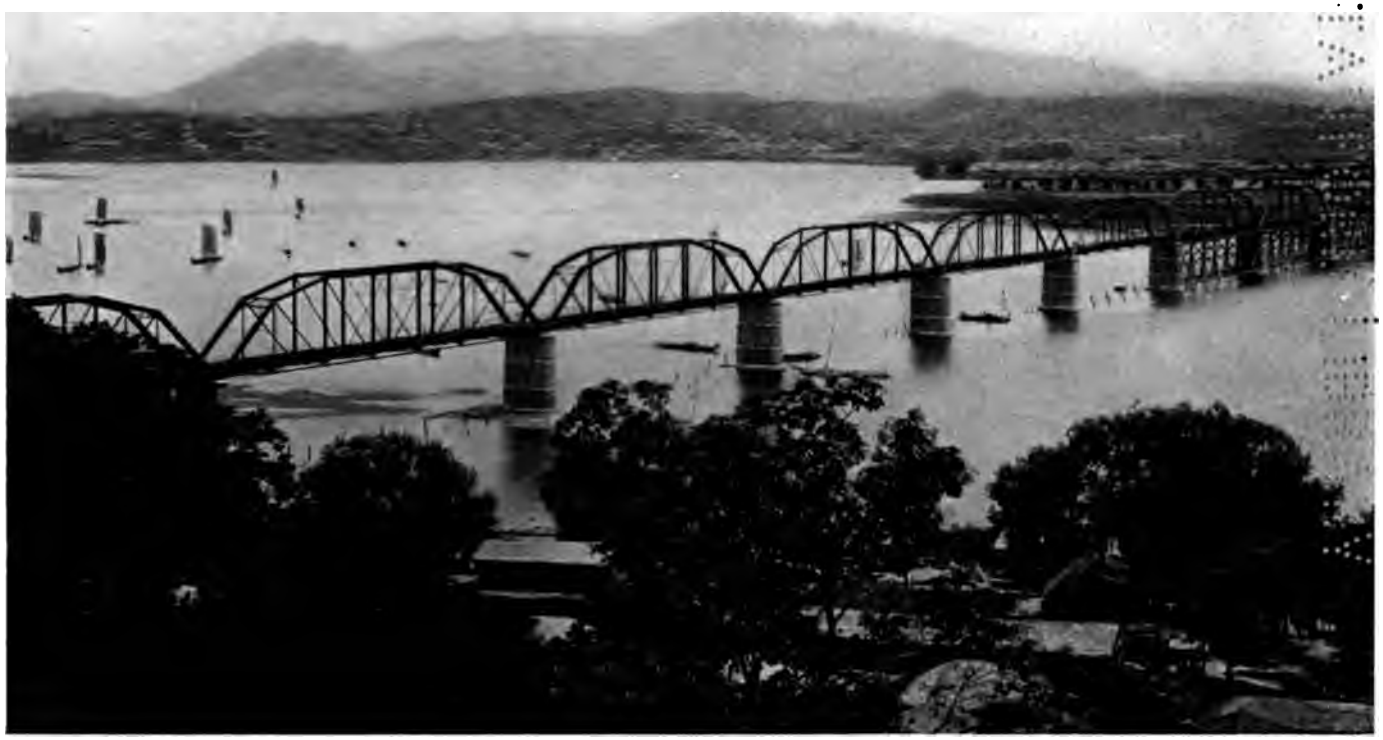
THE study of the origin and the ethnological affinities of the Korean people is yet in its infancy. Not until a close and exhaustive investigation has been made of the monuments, the folk-lore, the language and all the other sources of information can anything be said definitely upon this question. It will be in place, therefore, to give here the tentative results already arrived at, but without dogmatising.

Oppert was the first to note that in Korea there are two types of face, — the one distinctly Mongolian, and the other lacking many of the Mongolian features and tending rather to the Malay type. To the new-comer all Koreans look alike; but long residence among them brings out the individual peculiarities, and one comes to recognise that there are as many kinds of face here as in the West. Dr. Baelz, one of the closest students of Far Eastern physiognomy, recognises the dual nature of the Korean type, and finds in it a remarkable resemblance to a similar feature of the Japanese, among whom we learn that there is a certain class, probably descendants of the ancient Yamato race, which has preserved to a great extent the same non-Mongolian cast of features. This seems to have been overlaid at some later time by a Polynesian stock. The ethnological relation between the non-Mongolian type in Korea and the similar type in Japan is one of the most interesting racial problems of the Far East. I feel sure that it is the infusion of this type into Korea and Japan that has differentiated these peoples so thoroughly from the Chinese.

Five centuries before Christ, northern Korea and southern

Korea were very clearly separated. The Kija dynasty in the north had consolidated the people into a more or less homogeneous state, but this kingdom never extended south further than the Han River. At this time the southern coast of the peninsula was peopled by a race differing in essential particulars from those of the north. Their language, social system, government, customs, money, ornaments, traditions and religion were all quite distinct from those of the north. Everything points to the belief that they were maritime settlers or colonists, and that they had come to the shores of Korea from the south.

The French missionaries in Korea were the first to note a curious similarity between the Korean language and the languages of the Dravidian peoples of southern India. It is well established that India was formerly inhabited by a race closely allied to the Turanian peoples, and that when the Aryan conquerors swept over India the earlier tribes were either driven in flight across into Burmah and the Malay Peninsula, or were forced to find safety among the mountains in the Deccan. From the Malay Peninsula we may imagine them spreading in various directions. Some went north along the coast, others into the Philippine Islands, then to Formosa, where Mr. Davidson, the best authority, declares that the Malay type prevails. The powerful "Black Current," the Gulf Stream of the Pacific, naturally swept northward those who were shipwrecked. The Liu-Kiu Islands were occupied, and the last wave of this great dispersion broke on the southern shores of Japan and Korea, leaving there the nucleus of those peoples who resemble each other so that if dressed alike they cannot be distinguished as Japanese or Korean even by an expert. The small amount of work that has been so far done indicates a striking resemblance between these southern Koreans and the natives of Formosa, and the careful comparison of the Korean language with that of the Dravidian peoples of southern India reveals such a remarkable similarity, phonetic, etymologic, and syntactic, that one is forced to recognise in it something more than mere coincidence. The endings of



AMERICAN BRIDGE ACROSS THE HAN

Looking north toward Seoul

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many of the names of the ancient colonies in southern Korea are the exact counterpart of Dravidian words meaning "settlement" or "town." The endings -caster and -coln in English are no more evidently from the Latin than these endings in Korea are from the Dravidian.

The early southern Koreans were wont to tattoo their bodies. The custom has died out, since the more rigorous climate of the peninsula compels the use of clothing covering the whole body. The description of the physiological features of those Dravidian tribes which have suffered the least from intermixture with others coincides in every particular with the features of the Korean. Of course it is impossible to go into the argument *in extenso* here; but the most reasonable conclusion to be arrived at to-day is that the peninsula of Korea is inhabited by two branches of the same original family, a part of which came around China by way of the north, and the other part by way of the south.

As we see in the historical review given elsewhere in these pages, the southern kingdom of Silla was the first to obtain control of the entire peninsula and impose her laws and language, and it is for this reason that the language to-day reflects much more of the southern stock than of the northern.[1]

Characteristics

In discussing the temperament and the mental characteristics of the Korean people, it will be necessary to begin with the trite saying that human nature is the same the world over. The newcomer to a strange country like this, where he sees so many curious and, to him, outlandish things, feels that the people are in some way essentially different from himself, that they suffer from some radical lack; but if he were to stay long enough to learn the language, and get behind the mask which hides the

[1] A full description of the linguistic affinities of Korean to the Dravidian dialects will be found in the author's *Comparative Grammar of Korean and Dravidian.*

genuine Korean from his mental view, he would find that the Korean might say after old Shylock, "I am a Korean. Hath not a Korean eyes? Hath not a Korean hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons? subject to the same diseases? healed with the same means? warmed and cooled by the same summer and winter as the Westerner is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not be revenged?" In other words, he will find that the differences between the Oriental and the Occidental are wholly superficial, the outcome of training and environment, and not of radical dissimilarity of temperament. But there is this to be said: it is far easier to get close to a Korean and to arrive at his point of view than to get close to a Japanese or a Chinese. Somehow or other there seems to be a greater temperamental difference between the Japanese or Chinese and the Westerner than between the Korean and the Westerner. I believe the reason for this lies in the fact of the different balance of temperamental qualities in these different peoples. The Japanese are a people of sanguine temperament. They are quick, versatile, idealistic, and their temperamental sprightliness approaches the verge of volatility. This quality stood them in good stead when the opportunity came for them to make the great *volte face* in 1868. It was a happy leap in the dark. In the very same way the Japanese often embarks upon business enterprises, utterly sanguine of success, but without forecasting what he will do in case of disaster. The Chinese, on the other hand, while very superstitious, is comparatively phlegmatic. He sees no rainbows and pursues no *ignes fatui.* He has none of the martial spirit which impels the Japanese to deeds of patriotic daring. But he is the best business man in the world. He is careful, patient, persevering, and content with small but steady gains. No one knows better than he the ultimate evil results of breaking a contract. Without laying too much emphasis upon these opposite tendencies in the Japanese and

Chinese, we may say that the former lean toward the idealistic, while the latter lean toward the utilitarian. The temperament of the Korean lies midway between the two, even as his country lies between Japan and China. This combination of qualities makes the Korean rationally idealistic. Those who have seen the Korean only superficially, and who mark his unthrifty habits, his happy-go-lucky methods, his narrowness of mind, will think my characterisation of him flattering; but those who have gone to the bottom of the Korean character, and are able to distinguish the true Korean from some of the caricatures which have been drawn of him, will agree that there is in him a most happy combination of rationality and emotionalism. And more than this, I would submit that it is the same combination that has made the Anglo-Saxon what he is. He is at once cool-headed and hot-headed. He can reason calmly and act at white heat. It is this welding of two different but not contrary characteristics that makes the power of the Anglo-Saxon peoples. It will be necessary to show, therefore, why it is that Korea has done so little to justify the right to claim such exceptional qualities. But before doing this, I would adduce a few facts to show on what my claim is based.

In the first place, it is the experience of those who have had to do with the various peoples of the Far East that it is easier to understand the Korean and get close to him than it is to understand either the Japanese or the Chinese. He is much more like ourselves. You lose the sense of difference very readily, and forget that he is a Korean and not a member of your own race. This in itself is a strong argument; for it would not be so if there were not some close intellectual, or moral, or temperamental bond of sympathy. The second argument is a religious one. The religions of China were forced upon Korea irrespective of her needs or desires. Confucianism, while apparently satisfactory to a man utterly devoid of imagination (a necessary instrument to be used in the work of unifying great masses of population, by anchoring them to the dead bones of their ances-

tors), can be nothing less than contemptible to a man possessed of actual humour. Two things have preserved the uniform political solidarity of the Chinese Empire for the last three thousand years, — the sacred ideograph and the ancestral grave. But Confucianism is no religion; it is simply patriarchal law. That law, like all other civil codes, received its birth and nutriment from the body politic of China by natural generation. But the Korean belongs to a different intellectual and temperamental species, and thus the law which was bone of China's bone and flesh of her flesh was less than a foster-child to Korea. Its entire lack of the mystical element renders it quite incapable of satisfying the religious cravings of such a people as the Koreans. Buddhism stands at the opposite pole from Confucianism. It is the most mystical of all cults outside the religion of the Nazarene. This is why it has become so strongly intrenched in Japan. While Confucianism leaves nothing to the imagination, Buddhism leaves everything. The idealism of the Japanese surrendered to it, and we may well believe that when Buddhism is driven to bay it will not be at Lhasa, the home of the Lamas, but at Nara or at Nikko. Here again that rational side of the Korean temperament came in play. While Confucianism contained too little mysticism for him, Buddhism contained too much; and so, while nominally accepting both, he made neither of them a part of himself.

It is said that when a company of Tartar horsemen capture one of the enemy they bury him to the neck in the earth, pack the dirt firmly about him so that he can move neither hand nor foot, place a bowl of water and a bowl of food just before his face, and leave him to die of hunger, thirst or sunstroke, or to be torn by wolves. This is the way, metaphorically, in which Korea was treated to religions. Both kinds were placed before her very face, but she could partake of neither. The sequel is important. The Christian religion was introduced into Korea by the Roman Catholics about a century ago, and by Protestants two decades ago. The former made considerable advance in spite of terrible

persecution, but their rate of advance was slow compared with what has been done by the Protestant missionaries. I make bold to say that the Christian religion, shorn of all trappings and embellishments of man's making, appeals perfectly to the rationally emotional temperament of the Korean. And it is to some extent this perfect adaptability which has won for Christianity such a speedy and enthusiastic hearing in this country. Christianity is at once the most rational and the most mystical of religions, and as such is best fitted, humanly speaking, to appeal to this people. This, of course, without derogation from its universal claims. One has but to consult the records of modern missions to see what a wonderful work has been done in this land by men who are presumably no more and no less devoted than those at work in other fields.

Being possessed, then, of a temperament closely allied to that of the Anglo-Saxon, what has caused the present state of intellectual and moral stagnation? Why is it that most people look upon the Korean as little better than contemptible? It is because in the sixth and seventh centuries, when Korea was in her formative stage, when she was just ready to enter upon a career of independent thought and achievement, the ponderous load of Chinese civilisation was laid upon her like an incubus. She knew no better than to accept these Chinese ideals, deeming in her ignorance that this would be better than to evolve ideals of her own. From that time to this she has been the slave of Chinese thought. She lost all spontaneity and originality. To imitate became her highest ambition, and she lost sight of all beyond this contracted horizon. Intrinsically and potentially the Korean is a man of high intellectual possibilities, but he is, superficially, what he is by virtue of his training and education. Take him out of this environment, and give him a chance to develop independently and naturally, and you would have as good a brain as the Far East has to offer.

Korea is a good illustration of the great influence which environment exerts upon a people's mental and moral character-

istics. I am not sure that the conservatism of either the Korean or the Chinese is a natural characteristic. The population of China is so vast and so crowded, social usages have become so stereotyped, the struggle for bare existence is so keen, that the slightest disturbance in the running of the social machine is sure to plunge thousands into immediate destitution and despair. At this point lies the enormous difficulty of reforming that country. It is like a huge machine, indescribably complicated, and so delicately adjusted that the variation of a hair's-breadth in any part will bring the whole thing to a standstill. Let me illustrate. There are a great many foreigners in China who are trying to evolve a phonetic system of writing for that country. It is a most laudable undertaking; but the system which has received most approbation is one in which our Roman letters are used to indicate the various sounds of that language. But these letters are made by the use of straight and curved lines, the latter being almost exclusively used in ordinary writing. Now we know that over two thousand years ago the Chinese discarded a system based upon curved lines, because it was found impossible to make them readily with the brush pen, universally used throughout the Far East. The introduction of a system containing a large proportion of curved lines implies, therefore, that the brush pen will be laid aside in favour of a hard pen, either in the form of our Western pen or in some similar form. Note the result. The use of a metal pen and fluid ink will do away with the brush pen, and will affect the industry whereby a million people make an already precarious living. The manufacture of india ink will likewise go to the wall. The paper now used in all forms of writing will be useless, and a very few, if any, of the manufacturing plants now in operation can be utilised for the manufacture of the hard, calendered paper which is needed for use with the steel pen. Moreover, the ink-stones, water-cups, writing-tablets, and all the other paraphernalia in use at the present time will have to be thrown away, and all the people engaged in the manufacture of these things will be deprived of their means of

support. All this is likely to happen if the system proposed is to become the general rule. Note how far-reaching even such a seemingly small change as this will be. It might be possible if there were any margin upon which all these people could subsist during the process of change; but there is none. It is for this reason that the present writer has urged that the Chinese people be invited to adopt the Korean alphabet, which is as simple in structure as any, and capable of the widest phonetic adaptation. It is a "square" character, and could therefore be written with the brush pen, as it is to-day by the Korean. The same paper, ink, and other apparatus now in use in China could be retained, and the only work to be done in introducing it is to overcome the sentimental prejudice of the Chinese in favour of the ideograph. It would affect the daily occupation of almost no Chinese workmen at all. This illustration has gone too far; but it will help to show how firmly these customs have sunk their roots in the soil of these nations, and it shows that conservatism has become *a necessity of life,* however much one might wish to get rid of it. But let us get back to Korea.

The Korean is highly conservative. One of his proverbs is that "If you try to shorten the road by going across lots, you will fall in with highwaymen." This is a strong plea for staying in the old ruts. His face is always turned back toward the past. He sees no statesmen, warriors, scholars or artists to-day that are in any way comparable with those of the olden times; nor does he even believe that the present is capable of evolving men who are up to the standard of those of former times.

But in spite of all this, he can be moved out of his conservatism by an appeal to his self-interest. The introduction of friction matches will illustrate this point. The Korean was confined to the use of flint and steel until about thirty years ago; but when matches entered the country in the wake of foreign treaties, he saw almost at once that they were cheaper and better in every way than his old method, and he adopted them without the least

remonstrance. There were a few fossils who clung to the flint and steel out of pure hatred of the new article, but they were laughed at by the overwhelming majority. The same is true of the introduction of petroleum, sewing-needles, thread, soap and a thousand other articles of daily use. The same is true in China. There is no conservatism that will stand out against self-interest.

And here we touch a second characteristic of the Korean. It cannot be truthfully said that the Korean is niggardly. It has been the opinion of most who have had intimate dealings with him that he is comparatively generous. He is generally lavish with his money when he has any, and when he has none he is quite willing to be lavish with some one else's money. Most foreigners have had a wider acquaintance with the latter than with the former. He is no miser. He considers that money is made to circulate, and he does his best to keep it from stagnation. He thinks that it is not worth getting unless it can be gotten easily. I doubt whether there is any land where the average citizen has seen greater ups and downs of pecuniary fortune. Having a handsome competence, he invests it all in some wild venture at the advice of a friend, and loses it all. He grumbles a little, but laughs it off, and saunters along the street with as much unconcern as before. It went easily — he will get some more as easily. And, to tell the truth, he generally does. It is simply because there are plenty more as careless as himself. He is undeniably improvident; but there is in it all a dash of generosity and a certain scorn of money which make us admire him for it, after all. I have seen Koreans despoiled of their wealth by hideous official indirection which, in the Anglo-Saxon, would call for mob law instantly; but they carried it off with a shrug of the shoulders and an insouciance of manner which would have done credit to the most hardened denizen of Wall Street. I am speaking here of the average Korean, but there are wide variations in both directions. There are those who hoard and scrimp and whine for more, and there are those who are

not only generous but prodigal. Foreigners are unfavourably impressed by the willingness with which the Korean when in poor circumstances will live on his friends; but this is to a large extent offset by the willingness with which he lets others live on him when he is in flourishing circumstances. Bare chance plays such a prominent part in the acquisition of a fortune here, that the favoured one is quite willing to pay handsomely for his good luck. And yet the Korean people are not without thrift. If a man has money, he will generally look about for a safe place to invest it. It is because the very safest places are still so unsafe that fortune has so much to do with the matter. He risks his money with his eyes wide open. He stands to win largely or lose all. An investment that does not bring in forty per cent a year is hardly satisfactory, nor *should* it be satisfactory, since the chances of loss are so great that the average of gain among a score of men will probably be no more than in our own lands. Why the chances of loss are so great will be discussed in its proper place.

Another striking characteristic of the Korean is his hospitality. This is a natural sequence of his general open-handedness. The guest is treated with cordial courtesy, whatever differences of opinion there may be or may have been between them. For the time being he is a guest, and nothing more. If he happens to be present at the time for the morning or afternoon meal, it is *de rigeur* to ask him to have a table of food; and many a man is impoverished by the heavy demands which are made upon his hospitality. Not that others have knowingly taken undue advantage of his good nature, but because his position or his business and social connections have made it necessary to keep open house, as it were. A Korean gentleman of my acquaintance, who can live well on twenty dollars a month in the country, recently refused a salary of twice that sum in Seoul on the plea that he had so many friends that he could not live on that amount. Seoul is very ill-supplied with inns; in fact, it has very little use for them. Everyone that comes up from the country has a

friend with whom he will lodge. It must be confessed that there are a considerable number of young men who come up to Seoul and stay a few days with each of their acquaintances in succession; and if they have a long enough calling list, they can manage to stay two or three years in the capital free of board and lodgings. Such a man finally becomes a public nuisance, and his friends reluctantly snub him. He always takes this hint and retires to his country home. I say that they reluctantly snub him, for the Korean is mortally afraid of being called stingy. You may call him a liar or a libertine, and he will laugh it off; but call him mean, and you flick him on the raw. Hospitality toward relatives is specially obligatory, and the abuse of it forms one of the most distressing things about Korea. The moment a man obtains distinction and wealth he becomes, as it were, the social head of his clan, and his relatives feel at liberty to visit him in shoals and stay indefinitely. They form a sort of social body-guard, — a background against which his distinction can be well displayed. If he walks out, they are at his elbow to help him across the ditches; if he has any financial transactions to arrange, they take the onerous duty off his hands. Meanwhile every hand is in his rice-bag, and every dollar spent pays toll to their hungry purses. It amounts to a sort of feudal communism, in which every successful man has to divide the profits with his relatives.

Another marked characteristic of the Korean is his pride. There are no people who will make more desperate attempts to keep up appearances. Take the case of one of our own *nouveaux riches* trying in every way to insinuate himself into good society, and you will have a good picture of a countless multitude of Koreans. In spite of the lamentable lack of effort to better their intellectual status or to broaden their mental horizon, there is a passionate desire to ascend a step on the social ladder. Put the average Korean in charge of a few dollars, even though they be not his own, or give him the supervision of the labour of a few men, — anything that will put him *over* somebody either physi-

cally or financially, and he will swell almost to bursting. Any accession of importance or prestige goes to his head like new wine, and is liable to make him very offensive. This unfortunate tendency forms one of the greatest dangers that has to be faced in using Koreans, whether in business, educational or religious lines. There are brilliant exceptions to this rule, and with better education and environment there is no reason to suppose that even the average Korean would preserve so sedulously this unpleasant quality. It is true of Korea as of most countries, that offensive pride shows itself less among those who have cause for pride than among those who are trying to establish a claim to it. It is the impecunious gentleman — the man of good extraction but indifferent fortune — that tries your patience to the point of breaking. I was once acquainted with such a person, and he applied to me for work on the plea of extreme poverty. He was a gentleman, and would do no work of a merely manual nature, so I set him to work colouring maps with a brush pen. This is work that any gentleman can do without shame. But he would come to my house and bury himself in an obscure corner to do the work, and would invent all sorts of tricks to prevent his acquaintances from discovering that he was working. I paid him in advance for his work, but he soon began to shirk it and still apply for more money. When I refused to pay more till he had earned what he had already received, he left in high dudgeon, established himself in a neighbouring house, and sent letter after letter, telling me that he was starving. I replied that he might starve if he wished; that there was money for him if he would work, and not otherwise. The last note I received announced that he was about to die, and that he should use all his influence on the other side of the grave to make me regret that I had used him so shabbily. I think he did die; but as that was fifteen years ago, and I have not yet begun to regret my action, I fear he is as shiftless in the land of shades as he was here. This is an extreme but actual case, and could doubtless be duplicated by most foreigners living in Korea.

The other side of the picture is more encouraging. There is the best of evidence that a large number of well-born people die annually of starvation because they are too proud to beg or even to borrow. This trait is embalmed in almost countless stories telling of how poor but worthy people, on the verge of starvation, were rescued from that cruel fate by some happy turn of fortune. In the city of Seoul there is one whole quarter almost wholly given up to residences of gentlemen to whom fortune has given the cold shoulder. It lies under the slopes of South Mountain, and you need only say of a man that he is a "South Ward Gentleman" to tell the whole story. Ordinarily the destitute gentleman does not hesitate to borrow. The changes of fortune are so sudden and frequent that he always has a plausible excuse and can make voluble promises of repayment. To his credit be it said that if the happy change should come he would be ready to fulfil his obligations. It has to be recorded, however, that only a very small proportion of those who borrow from foreigners ever experience that happy change. There are several ways to deal with such people: the first is to lend them what they want; the second is to refuse entirely; and the third is to do as one foreigner did, — when the Korean asked for the loan of ten dollars, he took out five and gave them to him, saying, "I will give this money to you rather than lend you ten. By so doing I have saved five dollars, and you have gotten that much without having to burden your memory with the debt." To the ordinary Korean borrower this would seem like making him a beggar, and he never would apply to the same source for another loan.

In the matter of truthfulness the Korean measures well up to the best standards of the Orient, which at best are none too high. The Chinese are good business men, but their honesty is of the kind that is based upon policy and not on morals. Among the common people of that land truthfulness is at a sad discount. It is largely so in all Far Eastern countries, but there are different kinds of untruthfulness. Some people lie out of pure maliciousness and for the mere fun of the thing. The Koreans do not

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A DANCING-GIRL POSTURING

belong to this class; but if they get into trouble, or are faced by some sudden emergency, or if the success of some plan depends upon a little twisting of the truth, they do not hesitate to enter upon the field of fiction. The difference between the Korean and the Westerner is illustrated by the different ways they will act if given the direct lie. If you call a Westerner a liar, it is best to prepare for emergencies; but in Korea it is as common to use the expression "You are a liar!" as it is to say "You don't say!" "Is it possible!" or "What, really?" in the West. A Korean sees about as much moral turpitude in a lie as we see in a mixed metaphor or a split infinitive.

As for morality in its narrower sense, the Koreans allow themselves great latitude. There is no word for home in their language, and much of the meaning which that word connotes is lost to them. So far as I can judge, the condition of Korea to-day as regards the relations of the sexes is much like that of ancient Greece in the days of Pericles. There is much similarity between the *kisang* (dancing-girl) of Korea and the *hetairai* of Greece. But besides this degraded class, Korea is also afflicted with other and, if possible, still lower grades of humanity, from which not even the most enlightened countries are free. The comparative ease with which a Korean can obtain the necessities of life makes him subject to those temptations which follow in the steps of leisure and luxury, and the stinging rebuke which a Japanese envoy administered at a banquet in Seoul in 1591, when the dancing-girls indulged in a disgraceful scramble for some oranges that were thrown to them, was not wholly undeserved. To-day there is little, if anything, to choose between Korea and Japan in this matter of private morals, the *geisha* of Japan being the exact counterpart of the *kisang* of Korea, while the other and still less reputable members of the *demi monde* are too low the world over to require classification. This much must be said in favour of the Koreans, that this depraved class is not recognised by law and advertised by segregation. But on this point, of course, publicists differ.

Every people has its own special way of fighting. The English and French are as thoroughly differentiated in this as are the Japanese and Koreans. Street quarrels are extremely common, but they seldom result in any great damage. Two stout coolies, the worse for wine, will begin disputing over some trivial matter, and indulge in very loud and very bad language, which, in spite of their close proximity to each other, is delivered at the very top of their voices and with an energy quite volcanic. Our Western oaths, though more heinous on account of the introduction of the name of the Deity, are in other respects mild compared with the flood of filth which pours from the lips of an angry Korean. Not only are these epithets entirely unquotable, but even their nature and subject-matter could not be mentioned with propriety. The very fact that people are allowed to use such language in public without being immediately arrested and lodged in jail is a sufficient commentary on the sad lack not only of delicacy but of common decency among the lowest classes in Korea.

After the vocabulary of abuse has been exhausted the two contestants clinch with each other, each attempting to grasp the other by the top-knot, which forms a most convenient handle. To clench the fist and strike a blow is almost unknown. Each man having secured his hold, they begin pulling each other down, all the time wasting their breath in mad invective. They kick at each other's abdomens with their heavy hobnailed shoes; and when one of them goes down, he is likely to be kicked to death by the other unless the onlookers intervene, which is usually the case. The Koreans are great peacemakers, and it is seldom that a quarrel between two individuals results in a free fight. The crowd does not take sides readily, but one of the friends of each of the fighters comes up behind him and throws his arms about him and attempts to drag him away; or the peacemaker will get between the two contestants and push with all his might, expostulating as hard as he can. It is really amusing to see two men roused to a point of absolute frenzy attempting to get at

each other across the shoulders of two men who are pushing them apart as hard as ever they can. The angry man will never offer violence to the one who is acting as peacemaker, but he is like a bulldog held in leash, while his antagonist is yapping at him frantically but futilely from the other side of the ring. When genuinely angry, the Korean may be said to be insane. He is entirely careless of life, and resembles nothing so much as a fanged beast. A fine froth gathers about his mouth and adds much to the illusion. It is my impression that there is comparatively little quarrelling unless more or less wine has been consumed. In his cups he is more Gaelic than Gallic. Unfortunately this ecstasy of anger does not fall upon the male sex alone, and when it takes possession of a Korean woman she becomes the impersonation of all the Furies rolled into one. She will stand and scream so loud that the sound finally refuses to come from her throat, and she simply retches. Every time I see a woman indulging in this nerve-racking process I marvel that she escapes a stroke of apoplexy. It seems that the Korean, from his very infancy, makes no attempt to control his temper. The children take the habit from their elders, and if things do not go as they wish they fly into a terrible passion, which either gains its end or gradually wears itself out.

The callousness which the Koreans exhibit in the presence of suffering, especially the suffering of animals, is a trait which they share with all Orientals. Most dumb animals have no way of showing that they are suffering unless the pain be extreme, and the Koreans seem to have argued from this that these animals do not suffer; at any rate, they show an utter unconcern even when the merest novice could see that the beast was suffering horribly. If a sick cat or a lame dog or a wounded bird is seen upon the street, the children, young and old, arm themselves with sticks and stones and amuse themselves with the thing until life is extinct. They take great pleasure in catching insects, pulling their legs or wings off, and watching their ludicrous motions. Dragon-flies and beetles are secured by a string about the body,

and allowed to fly or jump as far as the string will permit, after which they are dragged back to the hand. Young sparrows that have fallen from the nests beneath the eaves are passed from hand to hand, their half-grown plumage is coloured with different tints, and at last, of course, they die of exhaustion. When an unfortunate dog is dragged down the street with a rope around its neck to the dog-meat shop, it will be followed by a jubilant crowd of children, who enjoy a lively anticipation of seeing the poor thing struggle in the mortal throes of strangulation.

There is one economic fact which goes far to explain the comparative lack of thrift in Korea. The ratio of population to arable area is far smaller than in Japan or China, and consequently, so long as Korea was closed to outsiders, the average of common comfort among the people was higher than in either of the two contiguous countries. Mendicancy was almost unknown; rice was frequently so common that the records say people could travel without cost. In other words, it required far less work to secure a comfortable living than elsewhere in the Orient. The people were not driven to thrift as an inexorable necessity. From the purely economic standpoint the Taiwunkun was right, and the opening of Korea was the worst thing that could happen; but from the moral and intellectual standpoint the change was for the best, for it will in time bring out long dormant qualities which otherwise would have suffered permanent eclipse.

There are traits of mind and heart in the Korean which the Far East can ill afford to spare; and if Japan should allow the nation to be overrun by, and crushed beneath, the wheels of a selfish policy, she would be guilty of an international mistake of the first magnitude.

CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENT

SO far as we can judge from the annals of the land, the form of government which prevails to-day has existed in all its fundamental particulars from the most ancient times. We know very little of how the country was governed previous to the time of the great influx of Chinese ideas in the seventh and eighth centuries, but of this we may be sure, that it was an absolute monarchy. At the first the King was called by the title *Kŏsŏgan,* which was changed to *Yisagum* and *Maripkan.* These titles, one or all, prevailed until the overwhelming tide of Chinese influence broke down all indigenous laws and the term *Wang* came to be applied. But even thus the common people clung to their native term for king in ordinary discourse, and even to this day he calls his sovereign the *Ingum.* This is a shortened form of the ancient *Yisagum.*

In one sense the power of the ruler of Korea is absolute; but as power depends entirely upon the two factors, information and instrument, it is far from true that he can do as he wishes in all things. If there is a divinity that hedges kings about, she has surely done her work thoroughly in Korea. Though no divine honours are done the King (now Emperor) of Korea, yet the supposed veneration of his person is so great that he must keep himself very closely secluded, the result being that all his commands are based upon information provided by his immediate attendants and officials. Then again, in the carrying out of these commands, the very same officials must be used who gave the information, and it would be difficult for him to find out whether the spirit as well as the letter of the command had been carried out. Granted, then, that his information be accurate and his

instruments loyal, it may be said that Korea is an absolute monarchy. You will be told that there is a written constitution by which the ruler is himself circumscribed, and it is true that some such book exists; but it may be taken for granted that unwritten law and precedent have much more to do with curtailing the prerogatives of kinghood than any written law. Time out of mind the kings of Korea have taken the bit in their teeth and gone according to their own inclinations, irrespective of any written or unwritten law; and it is beyond question that no such tradition or law ever stood in the way if there was any strong reason for going counter to it. Of course this could not be done except by the acquiescence of the officials immediately about the King's person.

There have been three phases in the history of Korean government. All through the early years, from the opening of our era until the beginning of the present dynasty in 1392, the civil and military branches of the government were so evenly balanced that there was always a contest between them for the favour of the King and the handling of the government. The power of sacerdotalism complicated things during the Koryu dynasty, and by the time Koryu came to its end the condition of things was deplorable. Confucian sympathisers, Buddhist sympathisers, and military leaders had carried on a suicidal war with each other, until the people hardly knew who it was that they could look to for government. And in fact during those last years the country governed itself very largely. There was one good result from this, that when Yi T'a-jo took hold of things in 1392 he found no one faction powerful enough to oppose him in his large scheme for a national reform. From that time the civil power came to its rightful place of supremacy and the military dropped behind. This was an immense benefit to the people, for it meant progress in the arts of peace. The first two centuries of the present dynasty afford us the pleasantest picture of all the long years of Korea's life. The old evils had been done away and the new ones had not been born. It was the

Golden Age of Korea. In the middle of the sixteenth century arose the various political parties whose continued and sanguinary strife has made the subsequent history of Korea such unpleasant reading. The Japanese invasion also did great harm, for besides depleting the wealth of the country and draining its best and worthiest blood, it left a crowd of men who by their exertions had gained a special claim upon the government, and who pressed their claim to the point of raising up new barriers between the upper and lower classes, which had not existed before. From that time on the goal of the Korean's ambition was to gain a place where, under the protection of the government, he might first get revenge upon his enemies and, secondly, seize upon their wealth. The law that was written in the statute books, that the King's relatives should not be given important positions under the government, came to be disregarded; the relatives of queens and even concubines were raised to the highest positions in the gift of the King; and as if this were not enough, eunuchs aspired to secure the virtual control of the mind of the sovereign, and time and again they have dictated important measures of government. The common people constantly went down in the scale and the so-called *yangban* went up, until a condition of things was reached which formed the limit of the people's endurance. They took things into their own hands, and, without a national assembly or conference, enacted the law that popular riot is the ultimate court of appeal in Korea. Officialdom has come to accept and abide by that law, and if a prefect or governor is driven out of his place by a popular uprising the government will think twice before attempting to reinstate him.

But we must go on to describe in brief and non-technical terms the elements which compose the Korean government. Immediately beneath the King (or Emperor) is the Prime Minister, with the Minister of the Left and Minister of the Right on either hand. They form the ultimate tribunal of all affairs which affect the realm. But there is a special office, that of Censor, which is

quite independent, and which ranks with that of Prime Minister. It is his function to scrutinise the acts of the Ministers of State and even of the King himself, and point out mistakes and dangers. As the Controller of the Currency in America has to examine all bills and give his approval before the money is paid, so these Censors have to take a final and dispassionate look at the government measures before they go into operation. Below these, again, are the six great offices of state, coresponding to our Cabinet. These until recently comprised the ministries of the Interior, Law, Ceremonies, Finance, War and Industries. After describing their various functions we will explain the changes that have been made in recent years. The Prime Minister and his two colleagues attended to the private business of the King, superintended the appointment of officials, and took the lead in times of sudden calamity or trouble. They stood between the King and all the other officials of the government, and no measures were adopted in any branch which did not come under their eye. The Department of the Interior, or Home Department as it is usually called, had charge of the whole prefectural system throughout the land, and was by far the most important of the ministries. It had much to say in the appointment of officials, for it had the preparation of the lists of nominees for most of the places under the government. It also had charge of the great national examinations, from among the successful competitors in which very many of the officials were chosen. The Law Department attended to the making and the mending of the laws, and closely connected with it was the Bureau of Police, which, although looking after the peace of the capital, carried out the requests of the Law Department in the matter of the detection and apprehension of criminals. The Police Department could do no more than carry on the preliminary examination of suspects, but for full trial and conviction it had to turn them over to the Law Department. The Ceremonial Department, as its name indicates, had charge of all government ceremonies, such as royal marriages, funerals and sacrifices. This was by no

means a sinecure, for the elaborate ceremonies of former times taxed the ingenuity and patience of those who had them in charge, and mistakes were sure to be detected and punished, since the ceremonies were public spectacles. No one who has seen a royal procession in Seoul will doubt that the Minister of Ceremonies earned his salary. The Department of Finance collected all the taxes of the country, took the census and controlled the granaries in which the revenue was stored. In former times much of the revenue was paid in kind, and not only rice but other grain and all sorts of products were sent up to Seoul for the use of the royal household. All these the Finance Department had to receive, examine, approve and store away. The War Department had charge of the army and navy of Korea, superintended the great military examinations, controlled the broad lands that had been set aside for the use of the army, and collected the taxes thereon. The Industrial Department was the least considered of all the great departments, but it was perhaps the busiest and most useful. It had charge of the preparation of all the "stage properties" of the government. It provided all the furnishings for royal functions, repaired the roads, kept the public buildings in order, and did any other odds and ends of work that it was called upon for. There was no Educational Department. The matter of education was joined with that of religion, and both were controlled by the Confucian School. This was directly responsible to the supreme head of the government through the Prime Minister. The foreign relations of Korea were so few and far between that no Foreign Office was established, but a little bureau of secondary rank attended to such affairs. The sending of the annual embassy to China was in the hands of the Ceremonial Department.

This is the merest skeleton of the governmental body of Korea. There are almost countless bureaus and offices whose nature and duties form such a complicated mosaic that the explication of them would only tire the reader. It should, however, be particularly noted that great changes have been introduced

since the opening of the country to foreign intercourse. In the first place, the Foreign Department has taken its place among the leading instruments of government; an Educational Department has been established, co-ordinate in grade with the other great departments; the Ceremonial Department has been relegated to a secondary place, and the Police Bureau has advanced to a position of comparative prominence.

We have seen that from the middle of the sixteenth century the barriers between the upper and lower classes were built higher and stronger, and the common people gradually got out of touch with the governing body. This was the cause of much of the subsequent trouble. Men of common extraction, however gifted, could not hope to reach distinction, and blueness of blood became the test of eligibility to office rather than genuine merit. The factional spirit added to this difficulty by making it certain that however good a statesman a man might be the other side would try to get his head removed from his shoulders at the first opportunity, and the more distinguished he became the greater would this desire be. From that time to this, almost all the really great men of Korea have met a violent death. But as all offices were filled with men who belonged to a sort of real nobility, the pride of place and the fear of having their honour brought in question did much to save the common people from the worst forms of oppression. The officials were arbitrary and often cruel, but their meannesses were of a large order, such as *yangbans* could engage in without derogation from their good repute in the eyes of their peers. But this state of things began to show signs of disintegration early in the nineteenth century. The power of money in politics began to make itself felt, and the size of the purse came to figure more prominently in the question of eligibility for office; the former exclusiveness of the *yangban* gradually gave way, and the line of demarcation between the upper and lower classes was little by little obliterated, until at the end of the century there were men of low extraction who held important government offices.

This worked evil every way, for such men knew that it was the power of money alone which raised them to eminence, and the old-time pride which kept indirection within certain bounds gave way to a shameless plundering of the people. Public offices were bought and sold like any other goods. There was a regular schedule of the price of offices, ranging from fifty thousand dollars for a provincial governorship to five hundred dollars for a small magistrate's position. The handsome returns which this brought in to the venial officials at Seoul fed their cupidity, and, in order to increase these felonious profits, the tenure of office was shortened so as to make the payment of these enormous fees more frequent. Of course this was a direct tax upon the people, for each governor or prefect was obliged to tax the people heavily in order to cover the price of office and to feather his own nest during his short tenure of that office. The central government will not interfere with the fleecing policy of a prefect so long as he pays into the treasury the regular amount of taxation, together with any other special taxes that the government may lay upon the people. In return for this non-interference in the prefect's little game the government only demands that if the prefect goes beyond the limit of the people's endurance, and they rise up and kill him or drive him from the place, neither he nor his family will trouble the government to reinstate him or obtain redress of any kind. It has come about, therefore, that the ability of a prefect is measured by the skill he shows in gauging the patience of the people and keeping the finger on the public pulse, like the inquisitors, in order to judge when the torture has reached a point where the endurance of the victim is exhausted. Why should the central government interfere in the man's behalf? The sooner he is driven from his place the sooner someone else will be found to pay for the office again. Of course there are many and brilliant exceptions, and not infrequently the people of a district will seize the person of their prefect and demand that the government continue him in his office for another term. They

know a good thing when they see it, and they are willing to run a little risk of arrest and punishment in order to keep a fair-minded prefect. They virtually say, "We want this man for prefect, and if you send any other we will drive him out." The result is that there will be no one else that will care to pay the price of the office, and the government has to obey the command of the people, even though it means the loss of the fee for that time. In former years the prefect was chosen from among the people of the district where he was to govern. He belonged to a local family; and it is easy to see how there would be every inducement to govern with moderation, for indirection would injure not only the prefect's reputation, but would endanger the standing of the whole family. This was all done away with, however, and now the prefect is chosen from among the friends or relatives of some high official in Seoul, and is a sort of administrative free-lance bent upon the exploiting of his unknown constituency. He cares nothing what the people think of him, for as soon as he has squeezed them to the limit he will retire from office, and they will know him no more.

If this were all that could be said of the country prefect, we should conclude that government is next to impossible in Korea, but the fact is that the power of the prefect is curtailed and modified in a very effective manner by means of his under officials, through whom he has to do his work. These men are called *ajuns,* and they act as the right-hand man and factotum of the prefect. Comparatively low though the position of the *ajun* may be, it can truthfully be said that he is the most important man in the administration of the Korean government. He deserves special mention. The word *ajun* has existed for many centuries in Korea, and is a word of native origin. It originally meant any government officer, and was as applicable to the highest ministers of the state as to the lowest government employee; but when the administration changed to its present form, the selecting of prefects from the

districts where they lived was given up and the irresponsible method of the present time was adopted. The old-time prefectural families however continued to hold their name of *ajun,* and the term gradually became narrowed to them alone. The newly appointed prefects, coming into districts that they knew nothing about, had to depend upon local help in order to get the reins of government in hand, and what more natural than that they should call upon the *ajuns* to help? So it came about that the old *ajun* class became a sort of hereditary advisorship to the local prefects in each district.

Each prefecture is a miniature of the central government. The prefect becomes, as it were, the king of his little state, and the *ajuns* are his ministers. So closely is the resemblance carried out that each prefect has his six ministers; namely, of Interior, Finance, Ceremonies, War, Law and Industries. It is through these men that all the business is performed. The emperor can change his cabinet at will, and has thousands from whom to choose, but the prefect has no choice. He must pick his helpers only from the little band of *ajuns* in his district, of whom there may be anywhere from ten to a hundred. In any case his choice is greatly restricted. Now these *ajuns* are all from local families, and have not only their reputations to support, but those of their families as well. It is this one thing that held the body politic of Korea together for so many centuries, in spite of the oppression and discouragements under which the people live. Foreigners have often wondered how the Koreans have been able to endure it, but they judge mostly from the gruesome tales told of the officials at the capital or of the rapacity of individual prefects. The reason of it all lies with the *ajuns,* who, like anchors, hold the ship of state to her moorings in spite of tides which periodically sweep back and forth and threaten to carry her upon the rocks.

The general impression is that the *ajuns* are a pack of wolves, whose business it is to fleece the people, and who lie awake nights concocting new plans for their spoliation. This is a sad

exaggeration. The Koreans put the matter in a nutshell when they say that a "big man" will escape censure for great faults and will be lauded to the skies for small acts of merit, while the "little man's" good acts are taken for granted and his slightest mistakes are exaggerated. The *ajun* is the scapegoat for everyone's sins, the safety-valve which saves the boiler from bursting. It is right to pile metaphors upon him, for everybody uses him as a dumping-ground for their abuse. No doubt there are many bad *ajuns,* but if they were half as bad as they are painted the people would long ago have exterminated them. They are fixtures in their various districts, and if they once forfeit the good-will of the people they cannot move away to "pastures new," but must suffer the permanent consequences. Their families and local interests are their hostages, and their normal attitude is not that of an oppressor, but that of a buffer between the people and the prefect. They must hold in check the rapacity of the prefect with one hand and appease the exasperation of the people with the other. Since it is their business to steer between these two, neither of whom can possibly be satisfied, uphold their own prestige with the prefect and at the same time preserve the good-will of the people, is it any wonder that we hear only evil of them?

The *ajun* is no simple yamen-runner who works with his own hands. He superintends the doing of all official business, but is no mere servant. He is necessarily a man of some degree of education, for he has to do all the clerical work of the office and keep the accounts. Not infrequently the best scholars of the district are found among these semi-officials. It is they who influence most largely the popular taste and feeling, for they come into such close touch with the common people that the latter take the cue from them most readily. They hold in their hands the greatest possibilities for good or evil. If they are good, it will be practically impossible for a bad prefect to oppress the people; and if they are bad, it will be equally impossible for a good prefect to govern well. They can keep the

prefect well-informed or ill-informed, and thus influence his commands; and even after the commands are issued they can frustrate them, for the execution of the orders of their superior is entirely in their hands. It is when both *ajun* and prefect are bad together and connive at the spoliation of the people that serious trouble arises. This is often enough the case; but, as we have seen, the *ajun* always has the curb of public opinion upon him, and oppression in any extreme sense is the exception rather than the rule.

The temptations of the *ajun* are very great. The whole revenue of the district passes through his hands, and it would be surprising if some of it did not stick to them. The prefect wants all that he can get, and watches the *ajun* as closely as he can; and at the same time the latter is trying to get as much out of the people as he may, not only for the prefect but for himself as well. He is thus between two fires. The people are ever trying to evade their taxes and jump their revenue bills. It is truly a case of diamond cut diamond. The qualities necessary to become a successful *ajun* make a long and formidable list. He must be tactful in the management of the prefect, exact in his accounts, firm and yet gentle with the people, resourceful in emergencies, masterful in crises, quick to turn to his advantage every circumstance, and in fact an expert in all the tricks of the successful politician. One of his most brilliant attainments is the ability to make excuses. If the people charge him with extortion, he spreads out expostulatory hands and says it is the prefect's order; and if the prefect charges him with short accounts, he bows low and swears that the people are squeezed dry and can give no more.

We have already shown that there is a "dead line," beyond which the people will not let the prefect go in his exactions. For the most part the official is able to gauge the feeling of the populace through the *ajuns,* but now and then he fails to do so. The people of the north are much quicker to take offence and show their teeth than those in the south. I remember once

in 1890 the governor of the city of Pyeng-yang sent some of his *ajuns* down into the town to collect a special and illegal tax from the merchants of a certain guild. The demand was preferred, and the merchants, without a moment's hesitation, rose up *en masse,* went to the house of the *ajun* who brought the message, razed it to the ground and scattered the timbers up and down the street. This was their answer, and the most amusing part of it was that the governor never opened his mouth in protest or tried to coerce them. He had his argument ready. The *ajuns* should have kept him informed of the state of public opinion; if they failed to do so, and had their houses pulled down about their ears, it was no affair of his. It was a good lesson to the *ajuns* merely. In another place the prefect came down from Seoul stuffed full of notions about governing with perfect justice and showing the people what enlightened government was like. Not a cent was squeezed for two months, and so of course there were no pickings for the *ajuns.* They looked knowingly at each other, but praised the prefect to his face. Not long after this they came down upon the people with demands that were quite unheard-of, and almost tearfully affirmed that they had no option. They knew the poor people could not stand it, but they must obey the prefect. That night a few hundred of the people armed themselves with clubs and came down the street toward the prefect's quarters breathing slaughter. The good magistrate was told that the wicked people were up in arms and that flight was his only hope. Well, the bewildered man folded his tents like the Arabs and as silently stole away, leaving the *ajuns* to chuckle over their easy victory. But it was playing with fire, for in the course of time the people learned that they had been cheated out of an honest prefect, and they made it particularly warm for those wily *ajuns.*

After making all allowances for the Oriental point of view, it must be confessed that the pursuit of justice is often much like a wild-goose chase. The law exists and the machinery of jus-

tice is in some sort of running order, but the product is very meagre. In order to explain this I shall have to suppose a few cases. If a man of the upper class has anything against a man of the lower class, he simply writes out the accusation on a piece of paper and sends it to the Police Bureau. If it is a slight offence that has been committed, he may ask the authorities simply to keep the man in jail for three or four days, administering a good sound beating once a day. In three cases out of four this will be done without further investigation, but if the gentleman is at all fair-minded he will appear in the course of a day or two and explain how it all came about. The culprit may be allowed to tell his side of the story or not, according as the police official in charge may think best. If the friends of the arrested man have money, they will probably go to the gentleman and say that if a small payment will appease him and cause him to send and get their friend out of prison they will be glad to talk about it. This subject of conversation is seldom uncongenial to the gentleman. If the jailer knows that the prisoner has money, there will be a substantial transaction before he is released. I was once asked to intervene in the case of a Christian convert who had been arrested for an unjust debt. He was confined at the office of the Supreme Court. I found that he had proved his case, and had secured a judgment which made him liable to the payment of only five hundred dollars instead of three times that amount. He had already paid three hundred of it to the court, to be handed to the creditor, but the court denied that this had been received. It was a very transparent trick, and I sat down and expressed a determination to stay there till the receipt was forthcoming. They protested that it was all right, but promised to look up the archives over night, and I retired. The next morning there came a nice note saying that they had found the receipt tucked away in the darkest corner of the archives. There had been a change in the staff, and the retiring incumbent had deposited the receipt and had told nothing about it to his successor. Hence

the mistake! But for the interference this man would have been compelled to pay the money twice. Another case that came within my own observation was that of a man who bought the franchise for cutting firewood in a certain government preserve. The price was four hundred dollars. This sum was paid in at the proper office, and the papers made out and delivered. A few days later the man found out that the same franchise had been sold to another man for the same price, and when he complained at the office he was told that he would have to divide the franchise with the other man. This made the transaction a losing one, and the original purchaser was ruined by it. There was no means of redress short of impeaching one of the strongest officials under the government. There is no such thing as a lawyer in the country. All that can be done is to have men face each other before the judge and tell their respective stories and adduce witnesses in their own defence. Anyone can ask questions, and there is little of the order which characterises a Western tribunal. The plaintiff and defendant are allowed to scream at each other and use vile epithets, each attempting to outface the other. It must be confessed that the power of money is used very commonly to weigh down the balances of justice. No matter how long one lives in this country, he will never get to understand how a people can possibly drop to such a low estate as to be willing to live without the remotest hope of receiving even-handed justice. Not a week passes but you come in personal contact with cases of injustice and brutality that would mean a riot in any civilised country. You marvel how the people endure it. Not to know at what moment you may be called upon to answer a trumped-up charge at the hands of a man who has the ear of the judge, and who, in spite of your protests and evidence that is *prima facie,* mulcts you of half your property, and this without the possibility of appeal or redress of any kind, — this, I say, is enough to make life hardly worth living. Within a week of the present moment a little case has occurred just beside my door. I had a vacant house,

the better part of which I loaned to a poor gentleman from the country and the poorer part to a common labourer. The gentleman orders the labourer to act as his servant without wages, because he is living in the same compound. The labourer refuses to do so. The gentleman writes to the prefect of police that he has been insulted, and the police seize the labourer and carry him away. I hear about the matter the next day and hurry to the police office and secure the man's release, but not in time to save him from a beating which cripples him for a week and makes it impossible for him to earn his bread. There is probably not a foreigner in Korea who has not been repeatedly asked to lend his influence in the cause of ordinary and self-evident justice.

Wealth and official position are practically synonymous in a country where it is generally recognised that justice is worth its price, and that the verdict will uniformly be given to the side which can show either the largest amount of money or an array of influence that intimidates the judge. I have not space in which to pile up illustrations of the ways by which people are manipulated for gain, but one only will give us a glimpse into the inner precincts of the system. There is a country gentleman living quietly at his home in the provinces. His entire patrimony amounts to, say, ten thousand dollars, and consists of his home and certain rice-fields surrounding it. He is a perfectly law-abiding citizen, and his reputation is without a flaw, but he has no strong political backing at Seoul or in the prefectural capital. A political trickster, who is on the look-out for some means to "raise the wind," singles out this gentleman for his victim, after finding all there is to find as to his property and connections. In order to carry out his plan he goes to Seoul and sees the official who has charge of the granting of honorary degrees or offices. He asks how much the title of *halyim* is worth, and finds that it will cost six thousand dollars. He therefore promises to pay down the sum of six thousand dollars if the official will make out the papers, inserting

the name of the country gentleman as the recipient of the high honour, and affixing thereto the statement that the fee is ten thousand dollars. Some questions are here asked, without doubt, as to the connections of the gentleman and his ability to bring powerful influence to bear upon the situation; but these being satisfactorily answered, the papers are made out, and the purchaser pays over the promised money, which he has probably obtained by pawning his own house at a monthly interest of five per cent. Armed with the papers thus obtained, he starts for the country and, upon his arrival at the town where the gentleman lives, announces that the town has all been honoured by having in its midst a man who has obtained the rank of *halyim*. He goes to the gentleman's house and congratulates him and turns over the papers. The gentleman looks at them aghast and says, "I have never applied for this honour, and I have no money to pay for it. You had better take it back and tell them that I must decline." This seems to shock the bearer of the papers almost beyond the power of speech, but at last he manages to say, "What! Do you mean to say that you actually refuse to accept this mark of distinction and favour from the government, that you spurn the gracious gift and thus indirectly insult his Majesty? I cannot believe it of you." But the gentleman insists that it will be impossible to pay the fee, and must dismiss the matter from consideration. This causes a burst of righteous indignation on the part of the trickster, and he leaves the house in a rage, vowing that the prefect will hear about the matter. The people, getting wind of how matters stand, may rise up and run the rascal out of town, in which case justice will secure a left-handed triumph; but the probability is the fellow will go to the prefect, show the papers, and offer to divide the proceeds of the transaction, at the same time intimating in a polite way that in case the prefect does not fall in with the plan there will be danger of serious complications in Seoul, which will involve him. The prefect gives in and summons the gentleman, with the result that his entire property goes to pay

for the empty honour, which will neither feed his children nor shelter them. One is tempted to rail at human nature, and to wonder that a man could be found so meek as to put up with this sort of treatment and not seek revenge in murder. This form of oppression cannot be said to be common, but even such extreme cases as this sometimes occur.

The penal code of Korea makes curious reading. Until recent years the method of capital punishment was decapitation. It was in this way that the French priests were killed in 1866. The victim is taken to the place of execution, outside the city walls, in a cart, followed by a jeering, hooting crowd. Placed upon his knees, he leans forward while several executioners circle around him and hack at his neck with half-sharpened swords. The body may then be dismembered and sent about the country in six sections, to be viewed by the people as an object-lesson. And a very effective one it ought to be. Since the Japan-China war this method has been given up, and the criminal is strangled to death in the prison or is compelled to drink poison. Women who are guilty of capital crimes are generally executed by poison. The most terrible kind of poison used is made by boiling a centipede. The sufferings which precede death in this case are very much greater than those which accompany decapitation, but all would prefer to be poisoned, for thus the publicity is avoided. Many are the stories of how men have bravely met death in the poisoned bowl. One official was playing a game of chess with an acquaintance. A very interesting point had been reached, and a few moves would decide the contest. At that moment a messenger came from the King with a cup of poison and delivered the gruesome message. The official looked at the messenger and the cup, but waved them aside, saying, "Just wait a moment. You should not disturb a man when he is in the midst of a game of chess. I will drink the poison directly." He then turned to his opponent and said, "It 's your turn to play." He won the game after half-a-dozen moves, and then quietly turned and drank off the poison. Trea-

son, murder, grave desecration and highway robbery are the most common causes of the execution of the capital sentence; but there are others that may be so punished at the will of the judge, — striking a parent, for instance, or various forms of *lèse majesté*. Treason always takes the form of an attempt to depose the supreme head of the government and substitute another in his place. The lamentable strife of parties and the consequent bitterness and jealousy are the most to blame for such lapses, and they are by no means uncommon, though usually unsuccessful. Until recent years it was always customary to follow the execution of a traitor with the razing of his house, the confiscation of all his property, the death of all his sons and other near male relatives, and the enslavement of all the female portion of the family. It has recently been enacted that the relatives should be exempt. To us it seems strange that the innocent should, for so many centuries, have been punished with the guilty, but a very little study of Korean conditions will solve the difficulty. There has never existed a police force in this country competent to hunt down and apprehend a criminal who has had a few hours' start. When a crime is discovered, it is possible to watch the city gates and seize the man if he attempts to go out without a disguise; but there are fifty ways by which he can evade the officers of the law, and it is always recognised that, once beyond the wall, there is absolutely no use in trying to catch him, unless there is good reason to know that he has gone to some specific place. If his guilt is certain, the law demands that his family produce him, and it will go very hard with them if the fugitive does not come back. But if he is only suspected, the way the police attempt to catch him is by watching his house in Seoul, feeling sure that at some time or other he will come back in secret. From the earliest times it was found necessary to put a check upon crime, of such a nature that even though the criminal himself could not be caught, he would abstain from evil. The only way was to involve his family in the trouble. This made the criminal pause before

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committing the crime, knowing that his family and relatives must suffer with him. It was preventive merely and not retributive punishment.

The commonest method of punishing officials has always been banishment. No man was ever exiled from the country, for in the days before the country was opened to foreign intercourse this would have seemed far more cruel than death; but banishment means the transportation of the offender to some distant portion of the country, often some island in the archipelago, and keeping him there at government expense and under strict espionage. The distance from the capital and the length of time of banishment are in accord with the heinousness of the offence. At the present time there are some half-dozen men in life banishment to distant islands, who were once high officials at the court. In the very worst cases the banished man is enclosed in a thorn hedge, and his food is pushed through a hole to him. It is a living death. For light offences an official may be sent for a month or two to some outlying village or to his native town. If an official has cause to suspect that he is distasteful to the King, or if he has been charged with some dereliction of duty by some other official, he will go outside the gates of Seoul and lodge in the suburbs, sending a message to the King to the effect that he is unworthy to stay in the capital. This is a method of securing a definite vindication from the King or else a release from official duties. It sometimes happens that the King will send a man outside the gates in this way pending an investigation, or as a slight reprimand for some non-observance of court etiquette. In all but the severer cases of banishment the offender is allowed to have his family with him in his distant retreat; but this is by no means usual. Each prefecture in the country is supposed to have a special building provided for the purpose of housing government officials who have been banished, and the cost of the keeping of such banished men is a charge on the government revenues. In the case of political offenders who have a strong following in the capital, it has generally been found

advisable to banish them first, and then send and have them executed at their place of banishment. It gives less occasion for trouble at the capital. Every King who has been deposed has been so treated.

The other forms of punishment in vogue are imprisonment, beating and impressment into the chain-gang. Men that are slightly suspected of seditious ideas are kept under lock and key, so that they may not have an opportunity to spread their dangerous notions. Nothing can be proved against them, and they are simply held in detention, awaiting a promised trial which in many cases never comes off. One man has lately been released from prison who remained a guest of the government in this way for six or seven years without trial. He was suspected of too liberal ideas.

The prisons, whether of the capital or the provinces, are mere shelters with earth floors and without fires. Food is supplied by the friends of the victim, or he will probably die of starvation. Every time the thermometer goes down below zero in the winter we hear of a certain number of cases of death from freezing in the prisons. But the sanitary arrangements are such that it remains a moot question whether the freezing cold of winter is not preferable to the heats of summer.

The most degrading form of punishment is that of the chain-gang; for here the offender is constantly being driven about the streets in a dull blue uniform, chained about the neck to three or four other unfortunates, and ever subject to the scorn of the public eye. It can be imagined with what feelings a proud man who has been accustomed to lord it over his fellows will pass through the streets in this guise. These slaves are put to all sorts of dirty work, and their emaciated and anæmic countenances peer out from under their broad straw hats with an insolence born of complete loss of self-respect.

The penal code is filled with directions for administering beatings. The number of blows is regulated by law, but it hardly need be said that the limitation of the punishment to the legal

number is dependent upon several important circumstances. In the dim past there was a government gauge or measure which determined the size of the sticks used for beating criminals; but this passed away long ago, and now the rods are whatever the minions of the law may select. Much of this work is done with a huge paddle, which falls with crushing force, frequently breaking the bones of the leg and rendering the victim a cripple for life. If he can afford to pay a handsome sum of money, the blows are partially arrested in mid air and fall with a gentle spat, or in some cases the ground beside the criminal receives the blows. To use the significant abbreviation, "it all depends." Who that is conversant with Korean life has not passed the local yamens in the country and heard lamentable howls, and upon inquiry learned that some poor fellow was being hammered nearly to death? Crowding in to get a sight of the victim, you behold him tied to a bench, and each time the ten-foot oar falls upon him you think it will rend his flesh. He shrieks for mercy between fainting fits, and is at last carried away, more dead than alive, to be thrown into his pen once more, and left without other attendance than that of his family, who are entirely ignorant of the means for binding up his horrible wounds. Beating seems to be an essential feature in almost all punishment. No criminal is executed until after he has been beaten almost to death. It is understood that before an execution can take place the criminal must confess his crime and acknowledge the justice of his sentence. This is not required in Western lands, and a man may go to his death protesting his innocence; but not so in the East. He is put on the whipping-bench and beaten until he subscribes to his own undoing. He may be never so innocent, but the torture will soon bring him to his senses; and he will see that it is better to be killed by a blow of the axe than to be slowly tortured to death.

This brings us to the question of torture for the purpose of obtaining evidence. It is bad enough to be subpœnaed in America to attend court and witness in a case, but in Korea this is a still

more serious matter. The witnesses have, in many cases, to be seized and held as practical prisoners until the trial of the case. Especially is this so in a criminal case. The witness is not looked upon as actually to blame for the crime, but one would think from the treatment that he receives that he was considered at least a *particeps criminis*. The witness-stand is often the torture block, and the proceedings begin with a twist of the screw in order to make the witness feel that he is "up against the law." In a murder case that was tried in the north, in which an attempt was made to find the perpetrator of this crime upon the person of a British citizen at the gold-mines, one of the witnesses, who was suspected of knowing more about the matter than he would tell, was placed in a sitting posture on the ground and tied to a stout stake. He was bound about the ankles and the knees, and then two sticks were crowded down between his two calves and pried apart like levers so that the bones of the lower leg were slowly bent without breaking. The pain must have been horrible, and men who saw it said that the victim fainted several times, but continued to assert his ignorance of the whole matter. When he was half killed, they gave him up as a bad case and sent him away. As he crawled off to his miserable hovel, he must have carried with him a vivid appreciation of justice. It turned out that he was wholly innocent of any knowledge of the crime, but that did not take away the memory of that excruciating pain that he had endured.

We have said that there are no lawyers in Korea. The result is that a suspected criminal has no one to conduct his defence, and the witnesses have no guarantee that they will be questioned in a fair manner. The judge and his underlings, or some one at his elbow, ask the questions, and these are coloured by the prejudices of the interrogator, so that it is not likely that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth will be forthcoming. If the witness knows what evidence the judge wishes to bring out, and that the lash will be applied until such evidence is forthcoming, it is ten to one that he will say what is desired,

irrespective of the facts. Many witnesses have only in mind to find out as soon as possible what it is the judge wants them to say, and then to say it. Why should they be beaten for nothing? Of course it would be rash to say that in many, perhaps a majority, of cases some sort of rough justice is not done. Society could hardly hold together without some modicum of justice, but it will be fairly safe to say that the amount of even-handed justice that is dispensed in Korea is not much more than is absolutely necessary to hold the fabric of the commonwealth from disintegration. The courts are not the friends of the people in any such sense that they offer a reasonable chance for the proper adjustment of legal difficulties. And yet the commonest thing in Korea is to hear men exclaim "*Chăpan hapsita,*" which means "Let us take the thing into court." It may be readily conjectured that it is always said in hot blood, without thinking of the consequences, for there is not more than one chance in ten that the question at issue is worth the trouble, and not more than one in two that it would be fairly adjudicated. One of the commonest methods of extortion is that of accusing a man of an offence and demanding pecuniary payment or indemnity. By fixing things beforehand the success of such a venture can be made practically sure. And this evil leads to that of blackmail. The terrible prevalence of this form of indirection is something of a gauge of Korean morals. It is practised in all walks of life, but generally against those of lower rank. It is so common that it is frequently anticipated, and regular sums are paid over for the privilege of not being lied about, just as bands of robbers are subsidised in some countries to secure immunity from sudden attack. It is the same in Korea as in China; there is a certain point beyond which it does not pay to go in oppressing those that are weaker than one's self. These people have learned by heart the story of the goose that laid the golden egg; and while they hunt the eggs very early in the morning and with great thoroughness, they do not actually kill the bird. The goose, on the other hand, does all in its power

to direct its energies in some other direction than the laying of eggs, and with some success. This we may call the normal condition of Korean society, in which the rule is to take as much as can be gotten by any safe means, irrespective of the ethics of the situation, and to conceal so far as possible the possession of anything worth taking. This is the reason why so many people wonder how a few Korean gentlemen were able to offer the government a loan of four million yen a few months ago in order to prevent the Japanese from securing a hold on the customs returns. Many, if not most, foreigners suppose that no Korean's estate will sum up more than a hundred thousand dollars; but the fact is that there are many millionaires among them, and a few multi-millionaires. Ostentation is not their cue, for knowledge of their opulence would only stir up envy in the minds of the less fortunate, and ways might be found of unburdening them of some of their surplus wealth. If there are great fortunes in Korea, it must be confessed that they generally represent the profits of many years of official indirection. There is no law of primogeniture which would tend to keep an immense patrimony in the hands of a single individual. It is sure to be divided up among the family or clan in the second generation.

CHAPTER IV

LEGENDARY AND ANCIENT HISTORY

THE beginnings of Korean history are shrouded in mystery, in which legend and myth take the place of definite recorded fact. These tales go back to no mean antiquity, for tradition says the great Tangun appeared over four thousand years ago. His coming was in this wise: a bear and a tiger met upon a mountain side and wished that they might become human beings. They heard the voice of the Creator say, "Eat a bunch of garlic and retire unto this cave and fast for twenty-one days and you shall become men." They ate and sought the gloom of the cave; but ere the time was half up, the tiger, by reason of the fierceness of his nature, could no longer endure the restraint and so came forth; but the bear, with greater patience, waited the allotted time, and then stepped forth a perfect woman. Whanung, the son of Whanin the Creator, asked his father to give him an earthly kingdom. The request was granted, and the spirit came on the wings of the wind to earth. It found the woman sitting beside a stream. It breathed about her, and she brought forth a son, and cradled him in moss beside the brook. In after years the wild people found him there beneath a paktal-tree, and made him their king. He taught them the rite of marriage, the art of building, and the way to bind up the hair with a cloth. He is said to have ruled from 2257 B. C. to 1122 B. C., with the town of Pyeng-yang as his capital.

Kija was a refugee from China at the time of the fall of the Shang dynasty in 1122. He was asked to take office under the new régime but refused, and secured permission to emigrate to Korea with five thousand followers. Whether he came by sea

or by land is not known; but upon his arrival he settled at Pyeng-yang, the Tangun retiring to Kuwul Mountain, where he shortly after resumed his spirit shape and disappeared. Kija, if he was really an historical character, was one of the greatest and most successful colonisers that the world has ever seen. He brought with him artisans of every kind, and all the other necessities of a self-supporting colony. Arriving here, he began a peaceful reign, making special laws for the civilising of the half-wild people, and adopting the language of the country. The stories that are told of his administrative powers would fill a volume. He was familiar with every phase of good government. His penal code was ideal, his financial system was perfectly adapted to the time, his wisdom was never at fault. He was the King Arthur of Korea. It is believed that it was by him that the land was first called Chosun, or "Land of Morning Freshness." No remnants of literature have come down to us from his time; and while the Koreans passionately resent the supposition that he was a merely legendary character, and show his tomb and many other relics of his kingdom, it can never be definitely said that he was an historical character. Outside the new city of Pyeng-yang is shown the site of Kija's capital, the ancient well dug by that sage, and a monument inscribed with his virtues.

The Kija dynasty showed its virility by lasting almost a thousand years. The names of the forty-two kings of the dynasty are given, and some apocryphal events of the dynasty's history, but no great confidence can be placed in them. The art of writing was in its infancy, and not a single word of recorded history has come down to us.

In 193 B. C. Wiman, a fugitive from Chinese justice, crossed the Yalu with a few followers, and found asylum under the ægis of Kijun, the last King of Old Chosun. This Wiman emulated the example of the proverbial snake in the bosom, and as soon as he had consummated his plans he descended upon the unwary Kijun and compelled him to take boat with a few fol-

lowers and flee southward along the coast. The kingdom of Ancient Chosun never extended southward further than the Han River, but it had gone far beyond the limits of the Yalu, and at one time stretched as far as the present city of Mukden. Manchuria is full of Korean graves, and for many centuries the power of Chosun was felt in this region.

Wiman the usurper did not long enjoy his stolen sweets. Eighty years after he came, the rule that he set up was crushed by the Chinese Emperor Wu-wang, and all northern Korea was divided into four provinces, under direct Chinese sway. This continued until 36 A. D., when the kingdom of Koguryu was established.

But we must follow the fortunes of Kijun, who had fled south. He landed on the shore of southern Korea, and there found a peculiar race of people, differing in almost every respect from those of the north. Their language, customs, institutions and manners were so curious that the account of Kijun's astonishment is preserved in tradition to the present day. There were three groups of tribes scattered along the southern coast of the peninsula. They were the Mahan, Pyonhan and Chinhan. Each of these was composed of a large number of independent and autonomous tribes. It is very probable that these people were settlers from the south. They bear a strong resemblance to the Malays, Formosans and other southern peoples. The language, houses, customs, ornaments, traditions and many other things point strongly toward such a southern origin.

Kijun, with the superior civilisation which he brought with him, found no difficulty in establishing control over the people of Mahan, and for many decades the Kija dynasty continued in its second home. But meanwhile important things were happening on the eastern coast among the people of Chinhan. At the time of the building of the Great Wall in China, about 225 B. C., a great number of Chinese had fled across the Yellow Sea to Korea, and, after wandering about awhile, had been given a place to live by the people of Chinhan. The superior

arts which they brought with them exerted a great influence upon their neighbours, and as they gradually became absorbed with the population of Chinhan, a new and stronger civilisation had its birth there. It was in 57 B. C. that several of the most powerful chiefs met and agreed to consolidate their interests and establish a kingdom such as that which they had heard about from their Chinese guests. This was done, and a kingdom was established, with its capital at the present town of Kyöngju. It was called Suyabul at first, but as it is generally known by the name Silla, which it adopted five centuries later, we shall call it by that name. A few years later a man named Chumong is said to have fled from his home in the far north near the Sungari River and to have come across the Yalu into Korea. The Chinese rule in those regions had become very weak, and Chumong found no difficulty in welding the scattered people into a strong kingdom. It was this man who, it is said, crossed the river on the fish which came to the surface and laid their backs together to make a bridge for him. The kingdom which he founded was called Koguryu, and it comprised all the northern portion of the peninsula. Again, in 9 B. C., a fugitive from Koguryu came into the northern borders of Mahan, and by treachery succeeded in wresting the kingdom away from its rightful king, on whose fallen throne he erected the new kingdom of Pakche. So that with the opening of our era there were three powers in Korea, — Silla in the southeast, Pakche in the southwest and Koguryu in the north.

The kingdom of Silla was by far the most highly civilised of the three kingdoms. She was an eminently peaceful power, and paid more attention to the arts of peace than to those of war. Koguryu in the north was just the opposite. She was constantly at war either with one of her sister states or with China. And she made by no means a mean antagonist. At one time her territory stretched far beyond the Yalu, and she was able to defy the armies of China. Once an army of over a million Chinese came and encamped upon the western bank of

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RELICS OF ANCIENT KOREA

The upper picture shows the Ancient Bell of Silla, one of the largest in the world, cast about 1400 years ago. The lower illustration presents the so-called "White Buddha," near Seoul. The people say that however high the water rises in the stream it flows around the feet of the image without touching them

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the Yalu, determined that Koguryu must be destroyed. Three hundred thousand of them crossed the river and marched on Pyeng-yang, but they were drawn into an ambush and cut down by the thousands. The remainder fled, but lost their way and were destroyed one by one, so that of those three hundred thousand men only seven thousand went back across the Yalu alive.

The kingdom of Pakche was like neither of the other two. She attended neither to the arts of peace nor to those of war. Her whole history is one of self-gratification and pleasure. We learn of no great acts that she performed, nor of any praiseworthy achievements. She generally gained by deceit and treachery what she wanted, but had not the courage to wage a war of conquest with either of her neighbours. There are many things which attest the high civilisation which Silla attained. To-day there hangs in the town of Kyöngju, Silla's old capital, a huge bell, the largest in Korea and one of the largest in the world. It was cast in the early days of Silla, only a few centuries after Christ. This alone would go far to prove the point, for the ability to cast a bell of that size argues a degree of mechanical and industrial skill of no mean dimensions. But besides this, there is still to be seen near that same town a stone tower that was used for astronomical purposes. We read in the records that Silla kept strict account of the various meteorological phenomena, such as eclipses of the sun and of meteors. At one place we read that an expected eclipse of the sun failed to take place, which indicates that they could calculate the date of such events in advance.

It was about three hundred years after Christ that Buddhism found entrance to Korea from China. Envoys from the various states in Korea met representatives of this cult at the court of China, and, as it was exceedingly popular there, the kings of the Korean realms asked that monks be sent to teach the tenets of the new religion here. One of the most celebrated of these was one Mararanta, whose name savours more of India than of

China. It may be that he was an Indian who had come to China to teach Buddhism, but was transferred to Korea. At any rate, the Korean people accepted the new cult eagerly, and Buddhism flourished. Not, however, without occasional setbacks, for there were periodical lapses from it when the monks were killed and the monasteries destroyed. The tales which have been woven about these events fill the pages of Korean folk-lore.

From very early times there was some sort of communication between Silla and Japan, but curiously enough it was with Pakche, on the opposite side of the peninsula, that the Japanese were most friendly. Japanese tradition says that the Empress Jingu came to Korea and conquered the whole peninsula. There is absolutely nothing in Korean annals that would attest the truth of this statement. Korean history goes back much further than the Japanese, and if such an invasion had taken place there would have been mention of it in the Korean annals. The whole setting of the Japanese legend shows that it is merely a fanciful tale, in which gods and goddesses and other extra-human agencies are involved. In those days it is more than probable that the people of Silla bore the same relation to Japan, as regards civilisation, that the Romans did to the tribes of Germany; and if Koguryu could beat back an army of a million Chinese, it is hardly to be believed that the Empress Jingu conquered the whole peninsula. Silla was the centre of a relatively high civilisation, and, while the Korean accounts tell us very little about Korean influence upon Japan, the Japanese annals indicate that there was a continual stream of advanced ideas and civilising influences crossing the straits into those islands. It would be interesting if we could believe that Arab traders touched the shores of Korea, but, besides being intrinsically improbable, the list of things they are said to have taken from the peninsula in trade shows conclusively that it is some other place that is spoken of.

As the centuries went by, the animosity that existed between

the three kingdoms crystallised into a definite determination on the part of Koguryu and of Pakche to destroy the other two kingdoms and rule supreme in the peninsula. This was possible only with the help of China. Silla was disposed to go along quietly and let the arts of peace work out their ultimate results, and it was the very superiority of Silla in these arts that excited the jealousy and hatred of the other powers. Time and again Koguryu tried in vain to cement a friendship with one or other of the Chinese dynasties, but always in vain, for her own restless spirit could not endure the restraint necessary for the continuance of such a compact. In time China came to realise that Koguryu was an utterly unreliable ally. Pakche from time to time made flattering appeals to China for aid against Silla and Koguryu, but the Chinese were too sensible to fail to recognise the more sterling qualities of the peaceful kingdom in the south-east, and when it came to the final analysis China sided with Silla against the other two, and the allied armies overthrew both Pakche and Koguryu. This occurred in the seventh century of our era. At first China did not turn the whole peninsula over to Silla; but as time went on Silla worked further and further north, until almost the whole of the present territory of Korea was in her hands.

This was an event of great importance. Now for the first time in Korean history the whole territory was united under a single sway. It was the language, the laws, the civilisation of Silla that welded the Korean people into a homogeneous population and laid the foundations for modern Korea. And at about the same time there began that wonderful influx of Chinese ideas which have done so much to mould Korea to the Chinese type. The introduction and study of the Chinese character began about this time, and the teaching of the Confucian doctrines. The literary life of Korea was begun on the Chinese foundation, and the people were made to believe that there was no intellectual life possible for them but such as sprung from Chinese ideals. A thousand products of the arts and sciences

poured into the peninsula and were eagerly adopted by the people, and they caused a very rapid advance in what we call enlightenment. There can be no question as to the great debt which Korea owes to China, but, on the other hand, this was not accomplished without causing a certain amount of harm to the Korean people. They were still in a formative period. They were just beginning to feel their own powers, and at this very moment they were flooded with the finished products of an older civilisation, which took away all incentive for personal effort. The genius of the people was smothered at the start, and never have they recovered from the intellectual stagnation which resulted from the overloading of their minds with Chinese ideals. And this was the more to be regretted, because these Chinese ideals were by no means fitted to the Korean temperament. Ever since that day the Koreans have been existing in spite of, rather than because of, that remarkable invasion of Chinese civilisation. Look, for instance, at the language. Korean is utterly different from the Chinese. It is a highly articulated language, and requires a very nice adjustment of its grammatical machinery to work smoothly; but the clumsy Chinese ideograph came in and prevented the working out of a phonetic system of writing, which would surely have come. The Korean people have made three distinct protests against the imposition of the Chinese character upon them: once, soon after its introduction, when a great scholar, Sulchong, was moved to make a sort of diacritical system, whereby the Chinese text could be rendered intelligible to the Korean; again, in the latter days of the Koryu dynasty; and again, in the early days of the present dynasty, when the native alphabet was evolved. In spite of all that China did for Korea by way of introducing the products of civilisation, it would have been far better for Korea to have gained these or similar things gradually, by working them out in her own way, thereby exercising her own mental powers and gaining something better even than the material benefits of civilisation.

But it was not to be. Chinese law, religion, dress, art, litera-

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THREE BRIDGES OF KOREA

(*a*) Typical foot-bridge
(*b*) The "Blood Bridge" at Songdo
(*c*) The only stone arch bridge in Seoul, 700 years old

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ture, science and ethics became the fashion, and I am convinced that from that day began the deterioration of the Korean people, which has culminated in her present helpless condition. Let us see how it worked from the very start. For upwards of three centuries Silla had the management of the whole country, but those were centuries of rapid decline. Luxury sapped the springs of her power. Her court became contemptible, and at last, when the hardy Wang-gon revolted and set up the new kingdom of Koryu, he held the power of Silla in such contempt that he would not even crush it, but let it linger on until it died a natural death. That lamentable deterioration began with the introduction of Chinese ideas. The young and virile state was not able to withstand the temptations that were put before it. It was like piling sweetmeats before a child who has not learned to use them in moderation. Silla glutted herself with them, and died of surfeit.

warned, turned and made their way home. Even then the Emperor would not give up, but set in motion new plans for the invasion of Japan. This wish was not to be gratified. A year later it became apparent to him that Koryu had been squeezed to the very limit, and the terrible privations of his own troops led him to change his mind. It must have been a bitter hour for him.

The last century of the Koryu dynasty was one swift fall into worse and worse excesses, until the end. One King was so unspeakably infamous that the Mongol Emperor sent for him; and when he arrived at the Mongol court the Emperor said, "I put you on the throne of Koryu, but you have done nothing but tear the skin off your subjects. Though your blood be fed to all the dogs of the world, justice would hardly be satisfied." The Emperor then placed him on a bier, and in this most disgraceful fashion he was carried away into banishment to western China.

In 1361 occurred another of those periodical invasions from the north. This time it was by the Hong-du, or "Red Heads," — a wild robber tribe. They came across the Yalu like locusts, and swarmed over the country. The army could do nothing with them, and soon they surrounded the capital, from which the King had fled. There they turned cannibal and carried on frightful orgies, while in another part of the country the great Yi T'a-jo, who was destined to found a new dynasty, was trying to whip into shape the demoralised army of Koryu. This he did, and before long they had the "Red Heads" on the run. These were also the years when the coast of Korea was continually harried by Japanese corsairs. No one knew at what point they would appear next, and so no preparation could be made to receive them. At first these raids were confined to the eastern coast, but gradually they extended around to the western side, and came north as far as the present Chemulpo. On one occasion they ravaged the island of Kang-wha, and even landed in Whang-ha Province, near the capital. So desperate did the

situation become at last, that the King was obliged to order that all the coast villages be moved inland ten miles, so that the marauders should find nothing to loot. This was done, and it is said that it is for this reason that the coast of Korea looks so barren and uninhabited even to this day.

Several of the kings took Mongol princesses for their wives, and these women, imitating the example of Jezebel, made themselves unmitigated nuisances. They knew they had behind them the Mongol emperors, and their lawless freaks and escapades scandalised the people. The magnificent marble pagoda that stands in the centre of Seoul to-day was a gift from one of the Mongol emperors to his daughter, the Queen of Koryu. The intention was to erect it at Songdo, the capital; but when it came from China by boat, it was found too heavy to carry overland to that town; so it was brought up the Han River and erected in Han-yang, the present Seoul.

It is a curious fact that the Mongols still held the island of Quelpart, and used it as a breeding-place for horses; and when the fall of the Mongol power became imminent, and the last Emperor saw that he was to be driven from his capital, he determined to make this island his asylum, and sent an enormous amount of treasure there for his future use. Such at least is the statement found in the Korean annals. When the time came, however, he was unable to make good his escape in this direction, but had to flee northward.

As the fourteenth century neared its close, there were two men in Korea worthy of note. One was a monk named Sindon, who was, so far as we can learn, a Korean counterpart of Arbaces in Bulwer Lytton's greatest novel. He had the King completely under his thumb, or " in his sleeve," as Koreans would say. There was no heir apparent to the throne, and the baseness of the King was so abject that this Sindon made him take to wife a concubine of his own, who was already pregnant by him, hoping thus to see his own son on the throne. The enormities of this man exceed belief and cannot be transcribed. He was

the consummate flower of Buddhism in Korea, and the people of this land, at least the intelligent portion of them, have ever since pointed to Sindon as being a legitimate product of the cult. The other person was General Yi, whom we have already mentioned. He was of excellent family, and had risen by his own merits to the leading position in the Koryu army. His prowess against the Japanese raiders, whom he had severely chastised on various occasions, made him the idol of the army; and as the baneful influence of Sindon increased at court, the people began to look at General Yi as a possible saviour. As for himself, he had no thought of usurping the throne. Nor would he have done so except for the suicidal action of the King. That semi-imbecile took it into his head that it would be a good thing to invade China, where the powerful Ming dynasty was already starting out on its glorious course. General Yi was ordered to lead the little army across the Yalu and attack the Celestial Empire. The mouse against the lion! This was too much even for General Yi's loyalty, but as yet he meditated nothing against the King's person. He knew where the difficulty lay. He was given his choice to lead the army against China or be executed. He appeared to comply, and led the army as far as one of the islands in the Yalu, and there addressing them, he asked if they were not of the opinion that it would be better to go back to Songdo and clean out the dissolute court than to attack their great patron, against whom they had not the semblance of a charge. The army applauded the move, and the return march commenced. The court was thunder-struck. The capital was in confusion. But their eyes were opened too late. The stern leader forced the gates and took up the work of reform with vigour. Sindon was banished and then killed. Scores of the worst officials were sent to their account, and the King was deprived of all his flatterers. This helpless individual was not actually forced to abdicate, but he saw the logic of the situation and gracefully lay down the sceptre. Only one thing had stood in the way of this. There was one good man still living in

Songdo, a great scholar and a highly respected official. It was Chöng Mong-ju. He was the only rock that blocked the way, — the only excuse for the continued existence of the Koryu dynasty. The third son of General Yi was ambitious that his father should mount the throne; and seeing how things lay, he determined to cut the gordian knot. This famous scholar was invited to a dinner, and on his way home at night he was struck down and murdered on a stone bridge near the city wall. That bridge exists to-day, and on it is a dark red blotch which becomes blood-red in the rain. Tradition says it is the blood of Chöng Mong-ju, which Heaven will never permit to be washed away. The annals say that General Yi mourned this crime; but we may be permitted to have our doubts, especially in view of the fact that he took advantage of it and allowed himself to be made king. Thus fell the kingdom of Koryu after a life of four hundred and seventy-five years.

CHAPTER VI

THE GOLDEN AGE OF KOREA AND THE JAPANESE INVASION

IT is probable that there was never a peaceful revolution that was followed by more radical changes than the one whereby the Kingdom of Koryu fell and the present dynasty began. In the first place the capital was changed from Songdo. This in itself was not remarkable, for the site of the capital is always changed with the change of dynasty; but when we note that the people and officials of Songdo were debarred the privilege of residing at the new seat of government, we see what a sweeping change was contemplated. Han-yang had long been looked upon as the probable capital of a new dynasty. In fact it had been made the secondary capital of Koryu. Prophecy had foretold that it would become the capital of a new kingdom, founded by a man named Yi. The Chinese character for this word is formed by placing the character for child below the character for wood, and the whole means "plum-tree." The superstitious King of Koryu had thought to injure the prospects of the Yi family, therefore, by planting the town of Han-yang with plum-trees, and then rooting them up. The trick did not work, and in the year 1392 the new kingdom was inaugurated. It was ordered to build a wall about the new capital, and one hundred and ninety thousand men worked for two months in the spring and ninety thousand more worked for an equal time in the autumn, and completed the stupendous work of building a wall twenty feet high and nine miles in length, surmounted with a battlement and embrasures, and pierced by eight massive gates. The palace that was first built was the Kyöng-bok Palace. A celebrated monk named

Mu-hak is said to have advised that it be built upon a different site from the one determined upon, and declared that if his advice was not followed the country would suffer a terrible war in just two centuries. His advice was not taken, and the Japanese invasion was the fulfilment of his prophecy!

The cardinal principle upon which this radical revolution was based was the necessity of freeing the country from the baneful influence of Buddhism. Yet the new ruler was wise enough to see that even this must be accomplished with moderation and tact. There was no great persecution in which thousands of people were massacred. The change of the capital and the appointment of an entirely new officiary, in which Buddhist ideas were not at all represented, was a long step in the right direction. It set the fashion, and the Buddhist element accepted the decision as final. We hear of no attempt being made to reinstate the Buddhist hierarchy in their former place of power. Gradually other laws were passed depriving Buddhist monks of various privileges. They were disfranchised and forbidden to enter the gates of the capital on pain of death. Immense tracts of land that had been absorbed by the powerful monasteries were taken from them and given back to the people. But it would be a mistake to think that Buddhism lost its influence upon the people. Its political power was gone, but by far the greater part of the populace still remained Buddhists, and it was only during the lapse of centuries that the monasteries fell to the decadent state in which we now find them. The very fact that Korea is still filled with them, and that funds can be found to keep them in any sort of condition, proves that Buddhism is not even yet in a moribund condition. The mysticism of the cult had taken too deep a hold upon the Korean temperament to be thrown off with ease, and it gradually became assimilated with the nature worship and fetichism of the country, until to-day the whole forms a conglomerate in which the ingredients are indistinguishable. No Korean perhaps ever grasped the idea of esoteric Buddhism or worked out the philosophy of the thing.

It may have been largely because he did not know what it all meant that he liked it.

The Ming Emperor had been led to look with suspicion upon Korea, because of the queer antics of the last kings of the Koryu dynasty, and when he heard of the startling change he sent asking why General Yi had usurped the throne. A celebrated scholar was sent to the Chinese court, and when the Emperor learned the facts he was well satisfied, and cemented a friendship with Korea which lasted without interruption until the Manchu hordes struck down the Ming power.

The first half of the fifteenth century was characterised by a series of marvellous advances in every sphere of life in Korea. One of the earliest kings determined to secure for the people a phonetic alphabet, in order that they might be freed from the necessity of learning the Chinese character. A commission was appointed which, after long and careful investigation, evolved an alphabet which, for simplicity of construction and phonetic power, has not its superior in the world. The consonants are all simplifications of the Thibetan consonants, which are of course Sanscrit in character, and the vowels are all taken from the simplest strokes of the ancient "seal character" of China. It was a work of genius, and might have been of incalculable benefit to the people had not the Chinese character been so firmly fixed upon them that change was practically impossible. Such a change must begin with the educated class, but the very difficulty of learning the Chinese was a barrier between the upper and lower classes, and to have let down this barrier by the encouragement of a popular alphabet would have been to forego their claims to exclusive consideration. The caste feeling was too strong, and the alphabet was relegated to women, as being beneath the dignity of a gentleman. A terrible wrong was done to the people by this act, and the generous motive of the King was frustrated. About the same time the King ordered the casting of metal printing-types. These were the first movable metal printing-types ever made, and anticipated their manufacture in

Europe by fifty years. A few samples of the ancient types still survive.

The dropping of Buddhistic ideals in government was like the dropping of sand-bags from a balloon, and the rebound was marvellous, proving that there was still a splendid virility in the Korean people. Art, literature, science, economics, agriculture and every other form of human activity felt the impulse, and before long the former degraded condition of the people was transformed. The most admirable thing about all this change was the moderation which marked it. There was no attempt to force changes in advance of public opinion, but the changes went hand in hand with education. The whole of the century beheld a continued advance. Great literary works were published, monasteries were turned into schools, the system of taxation was made more uniform, all sorts of mechanical devices were invented, including a clepsydra. The great bell was cast and hung in the centre of Seoul, the land was at peace with all its neighbours, and friendly envoys came from many contiguous lands. The piratical raids of the Japanese stopped, and it is probable that, even as early as this time, a trading station of some kind existed at Fusan by permission of the Korean government. Curiously enough the century closed in gloom, for a prince of most depraved character, the son of a concubine, came to the throne, and made it his business to play the fool exceedingly. There was no excess of rioting to which he would not go, and for a time he inflicted untold miseries upon the people; but he was out of tune with the times, and before long he was violently deposed and sent into banishment, and the former state of prosperity again prevailed.

The middle of the sixteenth century witnessed the rise of the so-called political parties of Korea. Before that time there had been no extensive political feuds, but now the officials became divided into hostile sets which warred against each other to the knife. There were no great political opinions or "platforms" underlying these parties. It was simply the fight for political

preferment, the very sublimation of the "spoils system." This marked the beginning of another period of retrogression. From that day to this there has been a steady and lamentable decline in political morals, and the idea of political position being essential to the acquisition of wealth has gained such a hold of the Korean mind that reform resembles a surgical operation which, in curing the disease, bids fair to kill the patient. This war of factions, in which the winner thought nothing of taking off the heads of all the leaders of the vanquished party, was the first great cause of Korea's inability to make any headway against the Japanese invaders.

As the century wore on, and the great Hideyoshi became Shogun in Japan, the ambitious designs of that unscrupulous usurper, together with the extreme weakness of Korea, made a combination of circumstances which boded no good for the peninsular people. A succession of bloody civil wars had put in Hideyoshi's hands an immense body of trained veterans, and the cessation of war in Japan left this army on his hands without anything to do. It could not well be disbanded, and it could not safely be kept on a war footing with nothing to do. This also gave Hideyoshi food for thought, and he came to the conclusion that he could kill several birds with one stone by invading Korea. His main intention was the conquest of China. Korea was to be but an incident along the way. It was necessary to make Korea the road by which he should invade China, and therefore he sent an envoy suggesting that, as he was about to conquer the four corners of the earth, Korea should give him free passage through her territory, or, better still, should join him in the subjugation of the Flowery Kingdom. To this the King replied that, as Korea had always been friendly with China, and looked upon her as a child upon a parent or as a younger brother upon an elder, she could not think of taking such a wicked course. After a considerable interchange of envoys, Hideyoshi became convinced that there was nothing to do but crush Korea, as a preliminary to the greater work.

It was in 1592 that Hideyoshi launched his armies at Korea. He was unable to come himself, but he put his forces under the command of Hideyi as chief, while the actual leaders were Kato and Konishi. The Korean and Japanese accounts agree substantially in saying that the Japanese army consisted of approximately two hundred and fifty thousand men. They had five thousand battle-axes, one hundred thousand long swords, one hundred thousand spears, one hundred thousand short swords, five hundred thousand daggers, three hundred thousand firearms, large and small, but no cannon. There were fifty thousand horses. Many of the Japanese wore hideous masks with which to frighten the enemy, but it was the musketry that did the work. The Koreans had no firearms at all, and this enormous discrepancy is the second of the main causes of Japanese success. The Koreans could not be expected to stand against trained men armed with muskets.

Korea had long expected the invasion, and had kept China well informed of the plans of Hideyoshi and his demands, but when the blow was struck it found Korea unprepared. She had enjoyed the blessings of peace so long that her army had dwindled to a mere posse of police, and her generals were used simply to grace their empty pageants. There may also have been the notion that Japan was simply a medley of half-savage tribes, whose armies could not be truly formidable. If so, the Koreans were greatly mistaken. At the first blow it became apparent that Korea could do nothing against the invaders. Fusan, Tong-na, Kim-ha, and the other towns along the route to Seoul fell in quick succession. It was found that the Japanese army was too large to advance by a single route, especially as they had to live off the country, in large part. So the army divided into three sections: one, led by General Konishi, came north by the middle road; another, to the east of this, was led by General Kato; and a western one was led by General Kuroda.

It was on the seventeenth of the fourth moon that the ter-

rible news of the landing of the Japanese reached Seoul by messenger, though the fire signals flashing from mountain top to mountain top had already signified that trouble had broken out. The King and the court were thrown into a panic, and feverish haste was used in calling together the scattered remnants of the army. The showing was extremely meagre. A few thousand men, poorly armed and entirely lacking in drill, were found, but their leaders were even worse than the men. It was resolved to send this inadequate force to oppose the Japanese at the great *Cho-ryung,* or " Bird Pass," where tens of men in defence were worth thousands in attack. The doughty general, Sil Yip, led this forlorn hope, but ere the pass was reached the gruesome tales of the Japanese prowess reached them, and Sil Yip determined to await the coming of the enemy on a plain, where he deemed that the battle-flails of the Koreans would do better execution than among the mountains. The pass was, therefore, undefended, and the Japanese swarmed over, met Sil Yip with his ragged following, swept them from their path and hurried on toward Seoul.

We must pause a moment in order to describe the Japanese leaders, Kato and Konishi, who were the animating spirits of the invasion. Kato was an old man and a conservative. He was withal an ardent Buddhist and a scholar of the old school. He was disgusted that such a young man as Konishi was placed in joint command with him. This Konishi was a new-school man, young and clever. He was a Roman Catholic convert, and in every respect the very opposite of Kato, except in bravery and self-assertion. They proved to be flint and steel to each other. They were now vying with one another which would reach Seoul first. Their routes had been decided by lot, and Konishi had proved fortunate, but he had more enemies to meet than Kato, and so their chances were about even.

General Yi Il was the ranking Korean field officer, and he with four thousand men was hurried south to block the path of the Japanese wherever he chanced to meet them. He crossed

Bird Pass and stationed his force at Sung-ju, in the very track of the approaching invaders. But when his scouts told him the numbers and the armament of the foe, he turned and fled back up the pass. This was bad enough, but his next act was treason, for he left the pass where ten men could have held a thousand in check, and put a wide stretch of country between himself and that terrible foe. He is not much to blame, considering the following that he had. He never stood up and attempted to fight the Japanese, but fell back as fast as they approached.

Konishi with his forces reached the banks of the Han River first, but there were no boats with which to cross, and the northern bank was defended by the Koreans, who here had a good opportunity to hold the enemy in check. But the sight of that vast array was too much for the Korean general in charge, and he retreated with his whole force, after destroying all his engines of war.

Meanwhile Seoul was in turmoil indeed. There was no one to man the walls, the people were in a panic of fear, messengers were running wildly here and there. Everything was in confusion. Some of the King's advisers urged him to flee to the north, others advised to stay and defend the city. He chose the former course, and on that summer night, at the beginning of the rainy season, he made hasty preparations and fled out the west gate along the "Peking Road." Behind him the city was in flames. The people were looting the government storehouses, and the slaves were destroying the archives in which were kept the slave-deeds; for slaves were deeded property, like real estate, in those days. The rain began to fall in torrents, and the royal cortège was drenched to the skin. Food had not been supplied in sufficient quantities, and the King himself had to go hungry for several hours. Seven days later he crossed the Tadong River, and was safe for a time in Pyeng-yang.

Meanwhile the Japanese were revelling in Seoul. Their great mistake was this delay. If they had pushed on resolutely and without delay, they would have taken China unprepared, but they

lingered by the way and gave time for the preparation of means for the ultimate victory of the Koreans. The country was awakening from the first stupor of fear, and loyal men were collecting forces here and there and drilling them in hope of ultimately being able to give the Japanese a home thrust. Strong though the Japanese army was, it laboured under certain difficulties. It was cut off from its source of supplies, and was living on the country. Every man that died by disease or otherwise was a dead loss, for his place could not be filled. This inability to obtain reinforcements was caused by the loyalty and the genius of Admiral Yi Sun-sin, a Korean whose name deserves to be placed beside that of any of the world's great heroes. Assuming charge of the Korean fleet in the south, he had invented a curious iron-clad in the shape of a tortoise. The back was covered with iron plates, and was impervious to the fire of the enemy. With his boat he met and engaged a Japanese fleet, bringing sixty thousand reinforcements to Hideyoshi's army. With his swift tortoise-boat he rammed the smaller Japanese craft right and left, and soon threw the whole fleet into confusion. Into the struggling mass he threw fire-arrows, and a terrible conflagration broke out, which destroyed almost the entire fleet. A few boats escaped and carried the news of the disaster back to Japan.

This may be called the turning-point in the war, for, although the Japanese forces went as far as Pyeng-yang, and the King had to seek asylum on the northern frontier, yet the spirit of the invasion was broken. China, moved at last by Korea's appeals, was beginning to wake up to the seriousness of the situation, and the Japanese, separated so long from their homes and entirely cut off from Japan, were beginning to be anxious. The mutual jealousies of the Japanese leaders also had their effect, so that when the allied Koreans and Chinese appeared before Pyeng-yang and began to storm the place, the Japanese were glad enough to steal away by night and hurry southward. They were pursued, and it was not till they had gone back as far as

the capital that they could rest long enough to take breath. It should be noted that China did not come to the aid of Korea until the backbone of the invasion was practically broken. It was a pity that Korea did not have an opportunity to finish off the Japanese single-handed. With no hope of reinforcement, the Japanese army would have been glad to make terms and retire, but the peculiar actions of the Chinese, which gave rise to the suspicion that they had been tampered with by the Japanese, gave the latter ample time to reach the southern coast and fortify themselves there. The very presence of the Chinese tended to retard the growth of that national spirit among the Koreans which led them to arm in defence of their country. It might have been the beginning of a new Korea, even as the recent war gives hope of the beginning of a new Russia, by awakening her to her own needs.

Intrenched in powerful forts along the southern coast, the Japanese held on for two full years, the Koreans swarming about them and doing good service at guerilla warfare. Countless are the stories told of the various bands of patriots that arose at this time and made life a torment for the invaders. The Japanese at last began to use diplomacy in order to extricate themselves from their unpleasant position. Envoys passed back and forth between Korea and China continually, and at last, in the summer of 1596, the Japanese army was allowed to escape to Japan. This was a grievous mistake. Konishi was willing to get away to Japan, because the redoubtable Admiral Yi Sun-sin was still alive, and so long as he was on the sea the Japanese could not hope to bring reinforcements to the peninsula. They had lost already one hundred and eighty thousand men at the hands of this Korean Nelson, and they were afraid of him.

We here meet with one of the results of party strife, the seeds of which had been sown half a century earlier. When the immediate pressure of war was removed, the various successful generals began vilifying each other and laying the blame for the initial disasters upon one another. Not a few of the very

best men were either killed or stripped of honours. Some of them retired in disgust, and refused to have anything more to do with a government that was carried on in such a way. But the most glaring instance of all this was that of Admiral Yi Sun-sin. When the Japanese went back to their own country, they began to plan another invasion, this time for the less ambitious purpose of punishing Korea. Only one thing was necessary to their success. Admiral Yi must be gotten out of the way. Korean accounts say that this was accomplished as follows.

A Korean who had attached himself to the fortunes of the Japanese was sent by the latter back to Korea, and he appeared before one of the Korean generals and offered to give some very important information. It was that a Japanese fleet was coming against Korea, and it would be very necessary to send Admiral Yi Sun-sin to intercept it at a certain group of islands. The King learned of this, and immediately ordered the admiral to carry out this work. Admiral Yi replied that the place mentioned was very dangerous for navigation, and that it would be far better to await the coming of the Japanese at a point nearer the Korean coast. His detractors used this as a handle, and charged him with treason in not obeying the word of the King. After refusing for a second time to jeopardise his fleet in this way, he was shorn of office and degraded to the ranks. He obeyed without a murmur. This was precisely what the Japanese were waiting for. Hearing that the formidable Yi was out of the way, they immediately sailed from Japan. The Korean fleet had been put under the command of a worthless official, who fled from before the enemy, and thus allowed the Japanese to land a second time. This was in the first moon of 1597, and it took a thousand boats to bring the Japanese army. When it landed, all was again in turmoil. A hasty appeal was made to China for help, and a loud cry was raised for the reinstatement of Admiral Yi Sun-sin in his old station. This was done, and he soon cut off the new army of invasion from

its source of supplies, and had them exactly where they were before. But this time the Japanese army did not have its own way upon the land as in the former case. The Koreans had been trained to war. Firearms had been procured, and their full initiation into Japanese methods had prepared them for defence. Small bands of Koreans swarmed about the Japanese, cutting off a dozen here and a score there, until they were glad to get behind the battlements of their forts. A powerful army of the Japanese started for Seoul by the western route, but they were met in Chiksan by the allied Koreans and Chinese, and so severely whipped that they never again attempted to march on the capital. For a time the war dragged on, neither side scoring any considerable victories, and in truth for part of the time there was so little fighting that the Japanese settled down like immigrants and tilled the soil, and even took wives from among the peasant women. But in 1598 it was decided that a final grand effort must be made to rid the country of them. The Japanese knew that their cause was hopeless, and they only wanted to get away safely. They had some boats, but they dared not leave the shelter of the guns of their forts, for fear that they would be attacked by Admiral Yi Sun-sin. They tried to bribe the Chinese generals, and it is said that in this they had some success. But when, relying on this, they boarded their vessels and set sail for Japan, they found that the famous admiral was not included in the bargain, for he came out at them, and, in the greatest naval battle of the war, destroyed almost the whole fleet. In the battle he was mortally wounded, but he did not regret this, for he saw that his country was freed of invaders, and he felt sure that his enemies at court would eventually compass his death even if he survived the war.

It was during this second invasion that the Japanese shipped back to Japan a large number of pickled ears and noses of Koreans, which were buried at Kyoto. The place is shown today, and stands a mute memorial of as savage and wanton an outrage as stains the record of any great people. During the

years of Japanese occupancy they sent back to Japan enormous quantities of booty of every kind. The Koreans were skilled in making a peculiar kind of glazed pottery, which the Japanese admired very much. So they took the whole colony bodily to Japan, with all their implements, and set them down in western Japan to carry on their industry. This succeeded so well that the celebrated Satsuma ware was the result. The remnants of the descendants of the Koreans are still found in Japan.

Only a few years elapsed before the Japanese applied to the Korean government to be allowed to establish a trading station at Fusan, or rather to re-establish it. Permission was granted, and elaborate laws were made limiting the number of boats that could come annually, the amount of goods they could bring, and the ceremonies that must be gone through. The book in which these details are set down is of formidable size. The perusal of it shows conclusively that Japan assumed a very humble attitude, and that Korea treated her at best no better than an equal. This trading station may be called the back door of Korea, for her face ever was toward China; and, while considerable trade was carried on by means of these annual trading expeditions of the Japanese, it was as nothing compared with the trade that was carried on with China by junk and overland through Manchuria.

CHAPTER VII

THE MANCHU INVASION AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

EARLY in the seventeenth century the Manchu power began to loom up on the horizon like a black cloud. China determined to strike a quick blow at it, and called upon Korea to aid. It is more than likely that the strenuous efforts that China had put forth in helping Korea rid herself of the Japanese had drained her resources, and she had a good right to call upon Korea to help against the Manchus, but Korea was very reluctant. She dreaded the consequences to herself if, after all, the Manchus should succeed. At last, however, she sent a contingent of troops and joined with China in the war. In the very first set battle the Chinese were defeated, and the Korean generals hastened to send messages to the Manchus, explaining how they had been forced into the conflict against their wishes, and suggesting that the Manchus and Koreans become friends. We do not know how much faith the Manchus put in these protestations, but they had bigger work on hand than punishing Korea, so they made friends with her for the time being. In about 1620 the Manchu power was very busy fighting China, and Korea was left to herself; but she was not at peace. One of the few great rebellions of her history occurred at this time. Actual civil war has been almost unknown in Korea since the sixth century, but Yi Kwal's Rebellion proved the exception. He arose in the north and determined to overthrow the dynasty. His intrigues and machinations would make a long story, but it must suffice to say that he collected a powerful army and marched on Seoul. The King was quite unprepared to sustain the attack, and so fled to the island of Kang-wha.

The rebel army entered the capital, and for a time Yi Kwal played at king, though his sway never extended far from the walls of Seoul. At last a loyal general managed to bring him to a standing fight, and he was chased from the capital and finally decapitated.

The Manchus were not satisfied with the way Korea fulfilled her engagements to pay tribute, and was suspicious that she favoured the Ming power. This led to recriminations, and at last, in 1627, the long-dreaded invasion took place. An army of thirty thousand Manchus crossed the Yalu and bore down upon Seoul. The King fled again to his island retreat, and from that point of vantage made an abject submission to the Manchus, and sealed the compact in blood by sacrificing a black bull and a white horse, and taking a solemn oath to be true to his new suzerain. The text of the Manchu and Korean oaths respectively were as follows:

"The second King of the Manchus makes a treaty with the King of Korea. From this day we have but one mind and one thought. If Korea breaks this oath, may Heaven send a curse upon her. If the Manchus break it, may they likewise be punished. The two kings will have an equal regard for truth, and they will govern according to the principles of religion. May Heaven help us and give us blessings."

"This day Korea takes oath and forms a treaty with the Kin kingdom. We swear by this sacrifice that each shall dwell secure in the possession of his own lands. If either hates and injures the other, may Heaven send punishment upon the offending party. These two kings have minds regardful of truth. Each must be at peace with the other."

Everyone except the Manchus knew that these were hollow protestations on Korea's part, and the Japanese hastened to send secret promises of military aid in case Korea wished to make war upon the Manchus. The Chinese Emperor also sent encouraging words, which still further unravelled Korea's allegiance to the new power across the Yalu.

It was at this time, 1631, that Korean envoys first fell in with Roman Catholic Christians in China, who were adherents of the celebrated Père Ricci. These envoys brought back some books on science, a pair of pistols, and a telescope, together with some other products of the West.

It soon became plain to the Manchus that Korea was proving false. In order to test it they sent and demanded tribute to the extent of ten thousand ounces of gold, a like amount of silver, and ten million pieces of linen. They evidently wanted an excuse to invade Korea again. Korea indignantly repudiated the demand, and in 1636 the two famous, or infamous, Manchu generals, Yonggolda and Mabuda, led their half-savage hordes across the Yalu.

It was on the twelfth day of the twelfth moon of 1636 that the fire mountains flashed the message from the Yalu to Seoul that the Manchu invasion had begun. An army of one hundred and forty thousand had crossed and were pushing by forced marches toward Seoul. Never had an army been known to cover the ground with such devouring speed. The King had already sent his family to Kang-wha, and was ready to go himself, when suddenly it was announced that Manchu videttes had been seen on the bank of the Han below Seoul. The road to Kang-wha was blocked. On a bitterly cold night the King, with a small retinue, fled out the east gate and made his way to the mountain fortress of Namhan, which had but lately been completed. This lies twenty miles to the southeast of the capital. Here his officials and a few thousand troops rallied about him, and it was hoped that the Manchus could be held off until loyal troops could come to the rescue. The Manchus entered Seoul and committed untold atrocities. The tale is a sickening one. They surrounded the wall of Namhan, and tried repeatedly to storm it, but without success. The tale of that siege, in which the small Korean garrison held at bay the enormous Manchu army for week after week, is a most fascinating one, but too long to be told here. When at last the inmates of the

fortress were literally starving to death, and every effort on the part of the Korean troops outside had proved unavailing, and after Kang-wha had been stormed and the entire royal family captured, the King surrendered and came out of Namhan. The Manchus made him go through a long and humiliating ceremony of surrender, erected an imposing monument upon which the disgraceful details were inscribed, and, after seizing hundreds of the people to carry away as slaves, they permitted the King to return to his capital; and the Manchu army, glutted with a surfeit of booty, moved northward. This finished the matter, for the Manchus had already won their fight with the Ming dynasty and were seated on the throne of China. To this day Korea has continued to look upon the Manchus as semi-savages, and she casts back longing eyes to the days of the Mings. The dress of Korea to-day and the coiffure are those of the Ming dynasty. The Manchus forced the people of China to change these, but the Koreans were allowed to retain them. So that the dress of Korea to-day is more Chinese than that of China itself. It cannot be doubted that if the Chinese people could cast off the Manchu yoke they would gladly return to the customs of the Ming dynasty.

It was about the middle of the seventeenth century that the ill-fated sailing-vessel *Sparwehr* sailed from Holland, with Hendrik Hamel as supercargo. There seem to have been sixty-four men on board, and when she went to pieces on the shore of Quelpart only thirty-six reached land alive. They were taken to Seoul by the authorities, and for fourteen years they lived either upon the royal bounty or by the work of their own hands, being driven, upon occasion, even to beggary. At last a remnant of them escaped and made their way to Nagasaki. Hamel afterward wrote an account of his experiences in Korea.

The remainder of the century passed without incident of special note, excepting the meeting of Koreans with Roman Catholic missionaries in Nanking, and the slight beginning of

Christian teaching. In 1677 a census of the country was taken. It was estimated that the population was 4,703,505. This is almost as many as the recent census report gives, which is manifestly absurd. Even at that early time the estimate was doubtless far below the truth, and the discrepancy has widened rather than narrowed during the interval. Party strife continued, and the annals are full of the ups and downs of these selfish and suicidal factions. Native records say that it was in 1686 that foreigners first entered Korea to preach the doctrines of Christianity. We are not told their nationality, but they were probably Chinese. Nothing is said of this in Dallet's great work on the history of Roman Catholicism in Korea, and it is rather difficult to understand. It would hardly be found in the records, however, unless there was some slight ground for it. We are told that the doctrine made good progress at that time, but that some of the highest officials asked the King to send the foreigners out of the country.

The eighteenth century opened with the strife of parties at white heat, but there were bright spots in the picture. The great mountain fortress back of Seoul, called Pukhan, was completed in 1717, and the same King who put through this stupendous piece of work also made himself a wellnigh unique figure in history by prohibiting, under the severest penalties, the manufacture or sale of intoxicating beverages of any kind. For years the drinking of such liquors was practically unknown. It is said that special police were stationed outside the gates, whose duty it was to smell the breath of every passer-by. No sinecure this! The governor of one of the northern provinces was executed because he failed to observe the letter of this law.

With the year 1730 there began an era of grand reform in Korea. It bade fair to bring the land back to the standard set by the first kings of the dynasty. A mere list of the reforms instituted at that time will give us a glimpse at the condition of the people. The grandsons of all female slaves were declared free; irrigation reservoirs were built; a new model of the solar

system was made, to replace the one destroyed during the Japanese invasion; the cruel form of torture consisting of bending the bones of the lower leg was discontinued; granaries were built to store grain for use in times of famine; torture with red-hot irons was done away; a war chariot was invented, having swords extending from the hubs of the wheels; a detective force was formed to keep watch of officials; the size of whipping-rods was strictly limited; the custom of branding thieves by striking the forehead with a bunch of needles and then rubbing ink into the wound, was abrogated; the three-decked war-vessel was done away with, and the swifter "Falcon Boat" was substituted; the length of the yardstick was carefully regulated and equalised throughout the country; the west and northeast gates of Seoul were roofed for the first time; the use of silk was discouraged; the corrupt *mudang,* or sorceress, class was outlawed; the great sewer of the capital was repaired and walled up; all the serfs in Korea were emancipated.

We are told that by this time the secret study of Roman Catholicism had resulted in the wide dissemination of that religion in Whang-ha and Kang-wun provinces. This caused uneasiness at court, and the King gave orders to put down the growing church. This was more easily said than done, and, as no deaths resulted, it is probable that little more than threats were indulged in.

In 1776 the census of the country showed a population of 7,006,248, which was an increase of over 2,300,000 in a century. This in itself attests the prosperity of the people. This rate of advance was probably very exceptional, and was largely due to the remarkably long and wise rule of King In-jong, whose reforms we have just recorded.

It was about 1780 that the scholar Kwun Chul-sin gathered about him a company of men and went into the mountains to study the doctrines of Christianity. They possessed a single copy of a Christian work. They one and all determined to adopt the Faith. About the same time another young man met

in Peking the Franciscan, Alexandre de Govea, and was baptised. He brought back to Korea many books, crosses, images and other religious emblems. The town of Yang-geun is called the birthplace of Korean Roman Catholicism. In 1785 active operations were begun against the new religion, and a memorial was sent in to the King about it. The following year the embassy to Peking brought back many Catholic books. This was reported to the King, and a great stir was made. It was decided to cause a strict search to be made in future of all baggage of embassies returning to Korea. This same year marked one of the most disastrous scourges of cholera that ever swept the country. It is said that three hundred and seventy thousand perished. In Seoul alone there were eight thousand recoveries, which would indicate at least sixty thousand deaths, half the population of the city at that time.

It was not until 1791 that the government began to take extreme measures against the Catholic converts. It began with the execution of two men who had buried their ancestral tablets. From this it extended until, in the eleventh moon of the year, four high officials, who had embraced the new faith, were seized and put to death. In the following year the Pope formally put the care of the Korean church into the hands of the Bishop of Peking, and this was almost immediately followed by the sending to Korea of the first regularly ordained priest in the person of Père Tsiou, a Chinese.

The end of the eighteenth century beheld a marked advance in the arts and sciences. Literature also came to the fore, and the King ordered the casting of two hundred thousand more printing-types like those that had been cast near the beginning of the dynasty. At the same time some two hundred and twenty thousand wooden types were also made. With these a large number of important works were published, touching upon law, religion, military tactics, ethics and the penal code.

The opening of the nineteenth century saw the government thoroughly committed to the policy of extirpating Roman Cathol-

icism. The reason for this was the fear of foreign influence. It was not primarily because the government cared what religion the people believed. The Japanese and Manchu invasions, which came so close together, made the government feel that there was no safety except in keeping as far as possible from all outside influences. It is for this reason that the year 1801 saw such a sanguinary persecution. About thirty people lost their lives, among whom were two princesses and the priest Tsiou.

The two decades beginning with 1810 were full of disaster for Korea. Floods, pestilences and famines followed thick upon each other, and to this unhappy epoch is due the comparatively poverty-stricken condition of the country to-day. In 1832 an English vessel appeared off Hong-ju, and its captain, Basil Hall, sent the King a letter saying that he had come to trade. Permission was refused. As the ship bore the device "Religion of Jesus Christ," some of the Catholic natives boarded her; but when they found that the people on board were Protestants, they beat a hasty retreat. Some boxes of books were sent to the King, but he returned them. Two of the people on this ship were Lindsay and Gutzlaff, who were attempting to enter the country as missionaries, but were unsuccessful. Meanwhile M. Bruguière, who had been made Bishop of Korea by Pope Gregory XVI, was trying to get into Korea across the northern border. In this he was thwarted by the Chinese priest Yu, who had succeeded in getting in, and was anxious to keep Bruguière out, hoping himself to obtain supreme power in the Korean church. The bishop died while waiting on the border, but Maubant, who was appointed in his place, succeeded in entering the country in 1835. By 1837 two other French priests had entered, one of them being Bishop Imbert. At this time there were some nine thousand converts, according to their own reckoning. This was the signal for the beginning of a most sanguinary persecution. A house to house search was made. The three French priests were caught, and when they refused to leave the country

they were declared traitors and executed. This was the beginning, and the worst elements in Korean character were let loose. Seventy people were decapitated, and sixty more died of strangulation or of stripes. This was but a fraction of the whole number that perished as a result of the persecution. The next ten years were filled with troubles that grew out of this, for the government did not lower its hand, but persevered in the attempt to thoroughly extirpate the hated religion. Of course this was impossible. In 1844 two more French priests entered the country by way of Quelpart, after desperate adventures by wind and flood. Two years later the French government sent a message to Korea complaining of the death of the three Frenchmen and threatening punishment, but this only excited the Koreans the more, for it proved what they had already suspected, that the Roman Catholics had a political power behind them. This caused a new outbreak, and the two new missionaries were with great difficulty concealed.

In the summer of 1847 two French war-vessels, the frigate *La Gloire* and the corvette *La Victorieuse*, came to the Korean coast to learn what had been the effect of the former letter. They both struck upon a mud-bank, and when the tide went down they broke in two. The crews escaped to a neighbouring island. The Korean government gave them every aid in its power, supplied them with food and other necessities, and even offered to furnish boats to take the men back to China. An English ship happened to pass, and it took the survivors back to Shanghai. The following year the Koreans answered the letter of the French, saying that the French priests had entered the country in disguise and had dressed in Korean clothes and consorted with men who were declared traitors. When apprehended, they had not given their French names, but Korean names, and when offered the opportunity of leaving the country they had stubbornly refused. Under these circumstances, the government asked what it could have done other than it did do. From the merely political and legal point of view, the

Korean government had all the facts on its side, but from the standpoint of humanity they were wrong. We must admire the heroism that made these men stay and suffer with their co-religionists, but it would be wrong to say that the government was without excuse. They needed rather enlightenment than censure. The French were not satisfied with this, but the breaking out of civil war in France in 1848 put an end to all negotiations for the time being. A new king came to the throne of Korea in 1849, and he was of such a mild character that nothing was done against the Catholics during his entire reign, which lasted until 1863. During this time of quiet the numbers of the adherents grew from eleven thousand to twenty thousand. So far as the government was concerned, it was a time of general degeneration, — an incapable king being surrounded by incapable ministers. Nothing of importance occurred until the news of the taking of Tientsin and the march on Peking by the allied French and English burst upon the court like a stroke of lightning from the clear sky. One can hardly imagine the state of terror into which the capital and the court were thrown. A mighty host of Western savages had dared to attack the citadel of the glorious Celestial Empire. It was indeed time to be up and doing. The Emperor might seek asylum in Korea; so every approach should be guarded. The outlaw bands that infested the neutral strip between Korea and Manchuria might invade Korea; so the border forts should be repaired and manned. Worst of all, the foreigners themselves might invade Korea. The cities would be burned, the people massacred or debauched, and the depraved religion would be established. The army should be reorganised, the forts guarding the approaches to Seoul should be repaired, forts should be built on Kang-wha, guarding the river approaches to the capital, and, last of all, every precaution should be taken lest the foreign priests get into communication with their compatriots outside. The work began, but the news of the fall of Peking precipitated a panic, in which a large part of the people of Seoul fled to the mountains, while many tried to secure from

the Roman Catholics badges of some kind that would secure them protection. But the excitement gradually subsided, and the defensive works proceeded with great rapidity. The King died in 1863, and a new régime was inaugurated, which presented a striking contrast to the one just ended. The record of this new reign is the story of the Opening of Korea.

CHAPTER VIII

THE OPENING OF KOREA

KING CHUL-JONG died without issue, and the Dowager Queen Cho took violent possession of the seals of office, and nominated the present ruler as king. He was then twelve years old. The government had been for many years in the hands of a faction that looked upon the spread of Christianity with unconcern; and it was doubly unfortunate that the Queen of the deceased King was compelled to hand over the seals, for the power fell into the hands of that faction whose main policy was undying hatred of the new religion. The father of the new King was Prince Heung-sung, who is better known by his later title, Taiwunkun. He was a man of strong personality and imperious will, and however the people may have come to hate him, they always respected him. He was perhaps the last really strong man to appear on the stage of Korean politics. His main characteristic was an indomitable will, which took the bit in its teeth and swept on to the goal of its desire irrespective of every obstacle, whether of morals, economics, politics or consanguinity. But he was unable to read the signs of the time. The two great mistakes of his life were in supposing that he could eradicate Roman Catholicism by force, and in supposing that he could prevent the opening of the country to foreign intercourse.

His first act was to marry his son, the King, to his wife's niece, a member of the Min family, hoping thus to insure to himself a long lease of power as regent, and later as the practical shaper of the country's policy. Time showed how sadly he was mistaken. His second act was nearly as bad a blunder, for he set about taxing the people to the very quick, in order to rebuild

for his son the Kyöngbok Palace, which had lain in ashes since the days of the Japanese invasion in 1592. This enormous task was at last completed, but at terrible cost. It ruined the finances of the country, debased the national currency, and set in motion a train of economic blunders which had lamentable results. Assuredly he was not a great man, however strong he may have been.

In January of 1866 a Russian gunboat dropped anchor in the harbour of Wonsan, and a message was sent to court asking for freedom of trade with Korea. It is said that the Roman Catholics made use of the consequent uneasiness at court to suggest that the only way to thwart Russia was by making an alliance with England and France. The regent is said to have given this plan close and favourable attention. In the light of subsequent events, it is difficult to determine whether the regent's interest in this plan was real, or whether it was only a ruse whereby to make the final *coup* all the more effective. All things considered, the latter theory is the more probable. The French themselves believed that the regent was pushed on to the great persecution of 1866 by the violently anti-Christian faction that had raised him to power, and that it was simply another case of "If thou do it not, thou art not Cæsar's friend." It is said that he reminded them of the burning of the summer palace at Peking and the occupation of the imperial Chinese capital; but they answered that they had killed Frenchmen before, and with impunity, and they could do it again. But whatever pressure was brought to bear upon him, he finally signed the death-warrant of the foreign priests, and on February 23 Bishop Berneux was arrested and lodged in prison. Brought up for trial, he said that he had come to save the souls of the Koreans, and that he had been in the country ten years. He refused to leave the country except by force. His death-warrant read as follows: "The accused, who gives his name as Chang, refuses to obey the King; he will not apostatise; he will not give the information required; he refuses to return to his own country. Therefore after the

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usual punishments he will be decapitated." With him Bretenieres, Beaulieu and Dorie were executed by decapitation. Their bodies were buried in a trench together, and later were recovered by Christians and given decent burial. A few days later Petitnicolas, Pourthie, Daveluy, Aumaitre and Huin were put to death. Of these Pourthie lost not only his life, but the manuscript of his Korean Grammar and his Latin-Korean-Chinese Dictionary, on which he had spent ten years of work. Three priests remained, — Calais, Feron and Ridel. They remained secure in hiding, but the last was chosen to take a message to China, giving information of these terrible events. After almost incredible labours, he succeeded in taking boat from the shore of Korea with eleven native Christians, and making the harbour of Chefoo. An expedition would have been despatched against Korea at once had it not been for trouble in Cochin-China which demanded attention.

In June the American sailing-vessel *Surprise* was wrecked off the coast of Whang-hai Province, and the crew were kindly treated by the authorities and taken across the Yalu, and handed over to the Chinese for safe conduct to Tientsin. Even in the midst of an anti-foreign demonstration of the severest type, these people were humanely treated and sent upon their way. Of another stamp was the *General Sherman* affair. This vessel approached the Korean coast in September, and in spite of warnings, and threats persisted in sailing up the Tadong River to Pyeng-yang. This was possible only because of high spring tides in conjunction with a heavy freshet, and it looked to the Koreans as if the Americans were burning their ships behind them, for by no possibility could the vessel be extricated from her dangerous position. Orders were therefore given for her destruction. She was burned with fire-rafts, and her crew were massacred as fast as they came ashore. Here again small blame is to be attached to the Koreans, considering the provocation.

Meanwhile the persecution of the Christians, which had been severe in the spring, had somewhat abated, but now it broke out

again with renewed vigour. Admiral Roze, being now ready to take up the matter of obtaining redress from Korea for the killing of the French priests, sent three boats to the Korean coast to make a preliminary survey of the situation. This caused a panic in Seoul, and thousands fled to the country. But the boats sailed away to China, and reported among other things the fate of the *General Sherman*. The real punitive expedition was now ready, and on October 11 the blockade of the Han River was announced to the Chinese government and the other powers. Seven men-of-war sailed for Korea and began their work by attacking the island of Kang-wha. The town was soon taken, and a large amount of war material was seized; but the Koreans were not disheartened. They sank junks in the river channel to block the approach to Seoul, and they sent a force of some five thousand men to the island of Kang-wha, consisting for the most part of tiger-hunters and other hardy fighters. These took their stand in a strongly fortified Buddhist monastery near the south side of the island, some twelve miles from where the French were stationed. The latter determined to attack this position, and a detachment of one hundred and sixty men was sent for this purpose. This was a serious blunder, for the whole French force would have been unable to dislodge five thousand men from the natural stronghold of the Koreans. Arriving before the walled fortress that was approachable only up a steep hill in the face of a double flanking fire, the French rushed up to the attack; but a withering fire of musketry and of rude cannon, made from models taken from the French wrecks, put nearly one-half the small French force instantly *hors de combat*. In a very few minutes the survivors were struggling back toward their main position, heavily burdened with their dead and wounded. The Koreans gave chase, and the day would have ended with a massacre had not the remaining French force come out to the relief of their comrades. The French Admiral, for what reason is not known, but probably because he recognised that his force was utterly unable to cope with the Korean army, fired the town of

Kang-wha and sailed away to China. The effect upon the regent and the people of Korea was electric. They had vanquished the very men who had stormed Peking and humbled the mighty Emperor. If the reader will try to view this event from the ill-informed standpoint of the Korean court, he will see that their exultation was reasonable and natural. The last argument against a sweeping persecution was now removed, and the fiat went forth that Christianity was to be annihilated. No quarter was to be given; neither age nor sex nor condition was to weigh in the balance. From that date till 1870 the persecution raged with almost unabated fury, and it is probable that it involved the lives of nearly twenty thousand Koreans. This includes those who fled to the mountains and froze or starved to death.

In 1871 an American expedition was fitted out to go to Korea and attempt to conclude some sort of treaty with Korea relative to the treatment of American seamen who were cast upon the shores of the peninsula, but also, and mainly, to open up trade relations. Admiral Rogers was in charge, and the flotilla consisted of five vessels, — the *Colorado, Alaska, Bernicia, Monocacy* and *Palos*. Frederick F. Low, the American minister at Peking, went with the fleet to carry on the diplomatic part of the undertaking. He knew very well, as is seen in the official correspondence, that it was a hopeless task, but he obeyed orders.

They reached the western coast of Korea at the end of May, and attempts were at once made to communicate with the government, but the regent shrewdly suspected that the expedition had to do with the massacre of the crew of the *General Sherman,* and determined to handle the Americans as he had the French. While the flotilla was waiting for an answer from Seoul, two of the smaller vessels were sent up the estuary between Kang-wha and the mainland to take soundings and make observations. This place was considered the very gate to the capital, and the extreme unwisdom of the act appeared when a small Korean fort on the island opened fire on the boats. The latter returned the fire, but

withdrew to report. It was decided that as the flag had been fired upon, an immediate attack was necessary in order to uphold the honour of the American Republic. A considerable force was sent against the little fort; the party landed, made its way across some very rough ground and stormed the place at the point of the bayonet. The Koreans fought with desperation, and every one of them fell at his post. Their ammunition gave out, but they caught up gravel in their fists and threw it into the faces of the Americans. The fort was taken, and the honour of the flag was vindicated with the loss of a single American officer. The victorious party then withdrew; and as it was now manifestly impossible to effect a friendly settlement of the matter, and the force at his command was utterly inadequate to accomplish anything decisive, the whole fleet sailed away. The regent cared little for the loss of a few earthworks on Kang-wha. Even if the Americans had overrun the peninsula and yet had not unseated the King, their final withdrawal would have left the government in the firm belief that the foreigners had been whipped. The approach of American gunboats up to the very "Gibraltar of Korea" was taken by the regent as a declaration of war, and the loss of the little garrison on Kang-wha was but a small price to pay for their exultation upon seeing the American vessels hull down in the Yellow Sea. The regent immediately caused the erection of a monument in the centre of Seoul, on which were carved anathemas against anyone who should ever propose peace with any Western power.

But in the interval the great awakening had taken place in Japan, and a new force was launched upon the troubled seas of Oriental politics. In the first flush of this wonderful dawn of modern Japan, the people who had steered the ship of state into that desired haven fancied that a similar success might be achieved in Korea, and an envoy was sent by way of Fusan, where still existed the Japanese trading-station, to see what could be done in Seoul. This was Hanabusa, and he succeeded in getting into communication with the Queen's party. It must

be noted that the time had now come when the regent must hand over the reins of power to his son, the King. His complete absorption of all the functions of the government had aroused the jealousy of the Queen's family, and a determined effort was being made to combat the regent's power. This was so successful that in 1873 he shook off the dust of Seoul from his shoes, and retired to a neighbouring town in disgust.

A new era was now opened. The friends of the ex-regent were many and powerful, and they encompassed the murder of the Queen's father, and committed other atrocities; but the Min faction was master of the situation, and the policy of seclusion gave way to one of genuine advancement. There can be no question that at first the Queen's faction stood for what is generally called progress. It had no special leaning toward China, and having reversed the policy of the regent it stood ready to do whatever was necessary to open up the country to foreign intercourse. The trouble came later, but of this anon.

In 1876 the first foreign treaty was signed with Japan. It seems that a Japanese war-vessel had approached the coast near Chemulpo, and had been fired upon by a Korean fort. A company of troops was landed and the fort was taken. The Korean government claimed that the commandant of the fort did not know that the vessel belonged to Japan; but however this may have been, it ended by Korea assenting to the ratification of a treaty of peace and friendship with Japan. By this instrument the Japanese recognised the independence of Korea, and treated with her as an equal, a policy which she has continued until recently. A minister was sent to Seoul in 1879 in the person of Hanabusa, whom we have already mentioned. A Korean envoy was also sent to Japan. The government arrested two French priests who had just arrived in Seoul, and they were in some danger; but while the authorities were considering the matter, and hesitating lest this act be inconsistent with the changed conditions, the Japanese minister secured their release and their transportation to Japan.

With the year 1880 began a train of events which caused the complete destruction of all the hopes which had been held out regarding Korea's genuine progress. It must be remembered that the Min family were sponsors for the opening of the country, and they took the lead in all innovations. They may not have been actuated by the highest motives, and it is more than likely that their new power went to their heads; but at the same time the hope of the country lay in them. Korea was not ready to inaugurate the sweeping changes which Japan had made. The temperament of her people and the nature of her institutions alike forbade it. But there arose in Seoul a faction which was determined to force the Koreans to an extreme policy of reform. One or two of these men had been in Japan and had imbibed the spirit of reform; and in their enthusiasm they thought the conservatism of centuries could be reversed in an hour. Unfortunately the Japanese thought the same thing, and were in full sympathy with these extreme radicals, calling them the liberal party, and growing restive under the slower methods of the Mins. The latter soon came to see that the Japanese were bent upon putting the power into the hands of these radicals, and in pure self-defence they turned to the Chinese for help. This was the beginning of the end. The inexperience of the Japanese had blocked all hope of a peaceful and judicious introduction of reforms, and had thrown the ruling faction into the arms of China, whose one desire now was to retrieve the mistake she had made in declaring that she was in no way responsible for or interested in Korea's blunders. We can here put our finger upon the very point where the conflict between Japan and China, and consequently the conflict between Japan and Russia, had its inception. If Japan had handled the situation with tact, allowed China to retain her shadowy patronage, and led the Min faction along a conservatively liberal path, there might have been a very different outcome. Or if Japan had been ready to face China and fight it out then and there, Korea's future would have been better secured. As it was, the ruling faction came to regard

Japan not as a friend, but as a decided enemy, and their whole power was directed toward preventing the things which Japan wished to accomplish. As yet the King himself was not completely under the domination of the Min family, and he looked with considerable complacency upon the efforts of the radicals to introduce reforms independently of the Min faction. He was not violently opposed in this, but the meshes of the conservative party were being thrown around him, and he was gradually being drawn away. And so the two parties were fairly well balanced for the time. On the one side was the Min family with a number of allied families, and on the other were the comparatively isolated members of the radical party, — Kim Hong-jip, Kim Ok-kyun, Pak Yong-hyo, Su Kwang-bum, Su Cha-p'il and others. We say isolated because they had only personally imbibed the spirit of radical reform, and they had behind them no large and deeply rooted family connection that was ready to see them through to a successful issue. They put on foot some important and salutary reforms, which were watched by the people with amused tolerance as the antics of madmen; but they were not taken seriously. These men came the nearest to being genuine patriots that Korea has ever seen. They were far ahead of their times, and what they desired was the very best thing for Korea. The fact that Korea did not want it — would have none of it — can never detract from the honour due those men. They were loyal to their best instincts, but they fell just short of greatness because they were unwilling to see their temporary ascendency checked in order that they might be of future use. They thought that it was a case of "now or never," in which opinion they were mistaken.

The military riot of 1882 was caused by the wretched treatment of the troops, whose rice was mixed with sand in order that one of the high officials might line his pockets. When it broke out, the Min family was the main point of attack. Several of them were killed and others fled. The palace was invaded, and the Queen was saved only by a trick, for she was carried out

on the back of a faithful retainer, who claimed she was his sister, and escaped to a country retreat. At the same time, with the utmost inconsistency, the Japanese were attacked, and had to beat a retreat to Chemulpo and thence to Japan. The legation was burned, and several Japanese were killed. The ex-regent was called back to power, and some fondly believed that the good old days had returned. This did not appear so clear when Count Inouye arrived at Chemulpo and began negotiations for the settlement of the difficulty. But the regent put him off, and practically refused to treat; so the count returned to Japan. Hardly had he gone when a Chinese force of three thousand men arrived, one of their officers being the well-known Yuan Shih-kei, who was to play an important rôle in Korea. These troops had come in the interests of the Min faction. They immediately seized the ringleaders of the revolt, and ten of them were torn asunder by bullocks. The ex-regent was then inveigled on board a boat in the river and spirited away to China. The Queen came back from her temporary banishment, and all was quiet again. The peace with Japan was patched up by the payment of an indemnity, and relations were resumed. The Chinese now had a firm hand on the government, and held it there by virtue of the fact that they had acted as the Queen's deliverers. Through their influence P. G. von Mollendorff was asked to come and establish a customs service here, and to act as general adviser. Two of the Chinese generals were attached to his staff.

In May of 1883 Commodore Schufeldt at Chemulpo drew up a treaty between Korea and the United States, and General Foote was sent as first American minister to the Korean court. In the following autumn treaties with Germany and Great Britain were also signed. Korea was now a recognised member, in good and regular standing, of the family of treaty powers. She was *de jure* an independent kingdom, for China had not only put no obstacles in the way of the ratification of these treaties, but had even facilitated them. Her subsequent claim to suzerainty was

comical in its incongruity. It was in this same year that Min Yong-ik, the nephew of the Queen and a prominent official, headed an embassy to the United States. He was accompanied by a number of young Koreans, most of whom were of the liberal party. At this time Min Yong-ik was the one important member of the Min faction who favoured radical reform, but on his return to Korea the clan feeling proved too powerful, and he gradually went over to the other side.

The year 1884 saw the two rival factions draw to the crisis which could not be averted. Reform movements were attempted, but the radical faction was thwarted at every turn by the conservatives, who had the Chinese behind them, and the ear of the King besides. The Chinese had a strong body of troops here also, which made the radicals feel that in order to carry out their plans it would be necessary to obtain Japanese support of a like character. The young Koreans who had been sent to Japan to learn military tactics now came home. At their head was Su Cha-p'il, better known as Dr. Philip Jaisohn. He was an ardent member of the radical faction. The leaders of that party communicated with the Japanese, or at least an understanding was arrived at, that Japan should back them in their attempt to stem the current of conservatism. As winter came on, it became more and more apparent that one or other of the two factions must give in, and the conservatives were so thoroughly intrenched that the radicals were very much disheartened. There were two possible courses open to them: one was to step down and out, and give the conservatives free rein, and the other was to take things into their own hands by a *coup de main,* and crush the opposition. While they were discussing this matter, and were arranging for a Japanese man-of-war to come to their support, the news leaked out that a plan was on foot for the violent deposition of the conservative faction. The imminent danger in which this placed the radical faction caused them to act at once. The new post-office was to be opened with a banquet on December 4. Min Yong-ik was one of the principal

guests, but members of both factions were there, together with some of the foreign representatives, the Chinese generals, and the foreign adviser Von Mollendorff. In the midst of the dinner Min Yong-ik was called out, and he was attacked by an assassin in the court, who wounded him horribly with a sword and made his escape. All was instantly in confusion. The Koreans hastily dispersed, and the wounded man was taken to the residence of Von Mollendorf, where he was cared for at the skilful hands of Dr. H. N. Allen, the newly arrived missionary physician from America. It has never been proved that this attack was made by the radicals themselves, but at any rate they saw that they must act promptly, for whether the crime was theirs or not they knew that it would be charged against them. It was now necessary for them to strike a swift, sharp blow or be destroyed *seriatim*. They chose the former course, and hurried to the palace, where they secured possession of the King's person, and forced him to send to the various heads of departments, ordering them to present themselves before him. These men came one by one, and as fast as they came they were cut down in cold blood by the company of students, lately from Japan, who had come to the palace as body-guard to the radical leaders. In this revolting massacre seven men were destroyed, including one of the eunuchs who had been influential on the conservative side. The King was then made to send to the Japanese minister, asking for a guard. This was immediately sent, and it looked as if the *coup* had been a success. The Chinese, however, looked at it differently, and forthwith made a regular military attack upon the palace, knowing full well that the situation could not possibly be of the King's making. The four hundred Japanese had a good deal of ground to cover, for the palace is of great extent, and the Chinese force outnumbered them seven to one. This action on the part of the Chinese had evidently not been anticipated by the revolutionists, and it soon became clear that the situation could not be maintained. The King and the people were all against the movement, and the situation could be saved

only by throwing Japan and China at each other's throats. The play was decided not to be worth the candle, and so the Japanese, in company with the radical leaders, forced their way out of the city to Chemulpo, and made their way to Japan.

This was the first great reverse that Japan suffered at the hands of the Chinese, and the question was definitely settled as to the attitude that Korea should take. She was henceforth completely in China's hands, and was destined to remain there until Japan reversed the verdict in 1894, just ten years later.

These ten years may be passed over without much comment. They witnessed a continual encroachment by China upon Korea's independence, and a hopeless acquiescence on the part of the latter, which came near to alienating the good-will of her best friends. The most important work of this decade was the introduction of Protestant Christianity in the peninsula. Several American societies began work here almost simultaneously, and in each case with marked success. The Korean temperament is such that it seems specially open to approach by Christianity. This peculiar susceptibility lies in the fact that Christianity, the most rational and at the same time the most mystical of all religions, finds in the Korean a like combination of rationality and idealism. Whether this theory be correct or not, the fact remains that Christian teaching at the hands of Protestant missionaries was readily accepted by the Koreans, and within the decade large portions of the country were dotted with Christian chapels and schools, the Scriptures were partly printed and disseminated, a large Christian literature was published, and, in every activity of Christian life, whether of an evangelistic or philanthropic nature, the foundations were laid for a work that should not stop short of the Christianising of the entire nation. It had been the fashion in certain circles to speak slightingly of Christian missions, but this is done only by those who are either unconvinced of the paramount claims of Christianity, or by those who, uninformed themselves, are willing to ape opinions that are fashionable. The extreme rancour of those who assail an insti-

tution of whose workings and results they are almost wholly ignorant can be reasonably explained only on the theory that they are goaded on to such assault by an uneasy conscience. The cause of missions does not need any apology or vindication, but we cannot forbear to wish that fewer of those who have enjoyed the hospitality of missionaries in foreign lands should be guilty of the unspeakable meanness of vilifying them after returning to the home lands.

This decade witnessed the opening of the various treaty ports of Chemulpo, Fusan, Wonsan and Seoul, the construction of telegraph lines, the opening of a Government Hospital and an English Language School, the building of a mint and other important government institutions, and the introduction of a thousand different products of Western thought. For several years Judge O. N. Denny, the foreign adviser, tried to keep Korea out of the clutches of China. His arguments were conclusive, but of little avail in the face of Korea's willingness to fall back upon the old-time relationship of suzerain and vassal. There can be little doubt that if the war had not intervened and reasserted Korean independence the foreign powers would have felt constrained to remove their legations.

The whole world knows the story of how the gradual encroachments of China led up to the war, and how the predictions of almost all the experts were falsified by the remarkable energy and skill displayed by Japan. That war swept through Korea and across the Yalu, leaving the country in the hands of Japan. The military prowess of the island empire was proved beyond a doubt, but it was yet to be shown that she had the peculiar kind of ability which could construct an independent power out of such material as she found in Korea. It was at this point that her weakness was revealed. The methods she adopted showed that she had not rightly gauged the situation, and showed her lack of adaptability to the new and strange conditions with which she was called upon to grapple. The brutal murder of the Queen, and the consequent alienation of Korean

good-will, the oppressive measures which led the King to throw himself into the hands of Russia, all these things demonstrated the lack of that constructive ability which was necessary to the successful solution of the knotty problem.

The decade beginning with 1894 saw a continuance of the old difficulty under a new guise. It was no longer a struggle between Japan and China, but between Japan and Russia. And just as Japan failed in the diplomatic duel with China, so she failed in the diplomatic duel with Russia. In each case a final resort to arms was necessary.

CHAPTER IX

THE ASSASSINATION OF THE QUEEN

THE year 1895 was big with history. Its events created a strong and lasting impression upon the whole Korean people, and it is in the light of these events that the whole subsequent history of the country must be interpreted. The year opened in apparent prosperity. The King had taken oath to govern according to enlightened principles, and had exhorted his officials to adhere strictly to the reform programme, protesting that if he himself failed to do so it would be an offence against Heaven. The Taiwunkun had retired from public life, but as his son, the brother of the King, was Minister of the Household, and his grandson Yi Chun-yong held a position near the King, there can be no doubt that in a private way the Taiwunkun exercised fully as much influence as he had done while in active office. It is necessary to bear in mind that the enmity of the Queen against the ex-regent extended to the sons of the latter, and, in spite of the terms of the King's oath, constant pressure was brought to bear upon the King from that direction. Whatever be the reason, we find that in January Yi Chun-yong was sent to Japan as Korean minister, an act that was really in favour of the anti-regent faction, since it temporarily removed one of the chief actors from the immediate stage.

As the King had sworn to pay personal attention to the details of government, it was deemed advisable to remove the cabinet meeting-place to the palace itself. Whether this was in accord with the spirit of the reforms may be doubted, for it worked directly for the complete centralisation of power, which later caused a reversal of the whole governmental policy.

The progress of the so-called reforms went on apace. The outside, the integuments, were changed, whatever may or may not have happened in the inner mind. The long baggy sleeves which had distinguished the true *yang-ban* were done away, and the side-openings of the long coats were sewed up. The width of the hat brims was curtailed, and other minor changes were effected. A salutary change was made by putting power into the hands of the ministers of state to carry out the work of their respective offices, according to law, without referring everything to the central government, excepting in very important cases, where it affected other departments. The immemorial customs regarding the salutations of inferiors to superiors and *vice versa* were largely done away and more democratic rules formulated. The Home Minister undertook to correct many abuses in the country, to ferret out cases where cultivated land returned no revenue, because of the indirection of the *ajuns,* and by this means the revenue of the government was very largely augmented.

At this time a radical change was made in the manner of punishing criminals. The cruel forms of execution and of torture which had always prevailed were done away, and more humane methods instituted. Decapitation was done away, and strangulation substituted. This worked no relief for the criminal, but the horrible spectacle of public decapitation was relegated to the past.

On the native New Year, which occurred in February, the King issued an important edict saying that office should be given not only to men of noble blood, but to others of good character and attainments, and he ordered that such men be selected and sent up from the country as candidates for official position. This was very pleasing to the country people, and was hailed as a genuine sign of political renovation. At the same time the ancient arch outside the West Gate was demolished. This arch was the only remaining sign of Chinese suzerainty, and its demolition broke the last visible thread which bound Korea to her

great patron. We say visible advisedly, for there can be no doubt that the intrinsic loyalty of the vast majority of Koreans to China was still practically unimpaired.

On February 13 Yun Chi-ho returned from many years' sojourn in America and China, where he had gained a genuine insight into truly enlightened government; and his return to Korea would have been a most happy augury had there been enough enlightened sentiment in the country to form a basis for genuine as distinguished from superficial reform.

Meanwhile the Japanese were carrying everything before them in Manchuria, and the end had now come. The Korean government therefore sent a special envoy to the Japanese headquarters on the field at Hai-cheng, congratulating them upon their brilliant successes. Soon after this the war terminated with the treaty of Shimonoseki, by the terms of which China ceded to Japan southern Manchuria, and the island of Formosa, abjured all interest in Korea, and paid an enormous indemnity. The result astonished the Koreans, but so strong was the feeling in favour of China that very many still clung to the idea that China would pay the money and then go to work preparing for a much greater struggle with the victorious Japanese.

Since the year 1456 Buddhist monks had been forbidden to enter Seoul. This was part of the general policy of this dynasty to give Buddhism no political foothold. Now the Japanese secured from the government a reinstatement of the Buddhists in their original position, and for the first time in four centuries and a half the mendicant monk with his wooden gong and rosary begged on the streets of Seoul.

In April a great misfortune overtook the house of the ex-regent. His grandson, Yi Chun-yong, nephew to the King, was arrested and charged with having connived with *tonghaks* and others to depose the King and assume the reins of power. It was not shown that Yi Chun-yong had been a main mover in the scheme or that he had even favoured the idea; but the very fact that his name had been used in such a connection was

enough to send him into banishment on the island of Kyo-dong, off Kang-wha. Four other men connected with this affair were executed. This was a severe blow to the ex-regent, and did much to bring him to the point which made possible the terrible events of the following October.

The 6th of June witnessed a great celebration in Seoul, which has gone down in history as Independence Day. A fête was held in the "Old Palace" which exceeded in brilliancy any similar demonstration since the opening of Korea to foreign relations.

It was inevitable that, from the moment of his arrival in Korea, Pak Yong-hyo should be at swords' points with the Taiwunkun, for the returned refugee represented the radical wing of the reform party, which the ex-regent had always bitterly opposed; and, besides, the presence of such a strong man would necessarily subtract from the influence of the aged but autocratic prince. It is probable that the Japanese brought Pak Yong-hyo back to Korea under the impression that he would prove a willing instrument in their hands; but they soon discovered that he had ideas and opinions of his own, and that he was working rather for Korea than for Japan. He failed to fall in with some of the plans which would help the Japanese, but at the expense of Korea, and, in fine, he became something of an embarrassment to his former benefactors. Meanwhile the King and Queen were both attached to him, and this for several reasons. He was a near relative of the King, and would have no cause for desiring a change in the status of the reigning house; in the second place he was a determined enemy of the Taiwunkun, and, in the third place, he was sure to work against a too liberal policy toward the Japanese. This attitude of increasing friendliness between him and the royal family was a further cause of uneasiness to the Japanese, although Count Inouye himself had done much to win the good-will of the Queen. Finally, Pak Yong-hyo had won the lasting gratitude of the King and Queen by exposing the machinations of Yi Chun-yong.

The ex-regent was determined that Pak Yong-hyo should be gotten out of the way. To this end he concocted a scheme which, with the probable sanction of the Japanese, seemed to promise success. He laid before the King certain grave charges of treason against Pak, which, though not believed either by the King or the Queen, convinced them that it would be impossible to shield him from probable destruction; for the people still called him a traitor, the ex-regent would spare no pains to see him put out of the way, and it was evident that the Japanese would not take any strong measures to protect him. The Queen called him up and advised him to make good his escape before action could be taken on the charge of treason. He complied, and forthwith escaped again to Japan. He had not as yet broken with the Japanese, and they were doubtless glad to help him away. It was early in July that he passed off the stage, perhaps for ever, and thus there were lost to Korea the services of one of the most genuinely patriotic Koreans of modern times. If the Japanese could have determinedly put the ex-regent in the background, and allowed Pak Yong-hyo to work out his plans on terms of amity with the royal family, all the evils which followed might easily have been averted. It was this act, as we believe, of allowing the ex-regent to carry out his scheme of personal revenge that caused the whole trouble, and there never was a time, before or since, when brighter hopes for Korea were more ruthlessly sacrificed.

But progressive measures kept on apace, and during July the government issued new and important mining, quarantine and army regulations, and organised a domestic postal system. A valuable mining concession in the district of Un-san in the north was granted to an American syndicate, a transaction that has proved the most profitable, at least to the foreigner, of any attempt to open up the resources of Korea.

Near the end of the month Korea suffered the misfortune of seeing Count Inouye retire from the legation in Seoul and return to Japan. Never did the Japanese have such need of a

strong and upright man in Seoul, and never had a Japanese minister in Seoul opportunity for greater distinction. There are those who believe that he despaired of accomplishing anything so long as the two opposing factions in Seoul were led by personalities so strong and so implacable in their mutual hatred as the Queen and the ex-regent. It is not unlikely that he felt that until one or other of these should be permanently removed from the field of action there could be no real opportunity for the renovation of Korea. This by no means implies that he desired such removal to be effected by forcible means, but it is not unnatural to suppose that he must have given expression to the conviction as to the futility of doing anything under existing conditions in the peninsula. There have been some who have believed that the Japanese authorities in Tokyo determined upon the removal of the obstacle in Seoul by any means in their power. Subsequent events gave some colour to this surmise, but we cannot and do not believe that the Japanese government was a party to the plot which ended in the tragedy of the following October, but that a fanatical and injudicious Japanese minister to Korea privately gave his sanction to an act which the Japanese government would have sternly forbidden had they been consulted.

On the first day of September Viscount Miura arrived from Japan to assume the duties of minister. Over a month had elapsed since the departure of Count Inouye. The viscount was an enthusiastic Buddhist, and evidently belonged to the old rather than the new Japan. He was, withal, a strenuous man, and is said to have considered the settlement of the Korean difficulties merely a matter of prompt and vigorous action. At the time of his arrival the ex-regent was living at his summer-house near the river, and from the very first he was in close relations with the new Japanese minister. It was quite evident that the latter had espoused the cause of the ex-regent as against the Queen, and that instead of trying to close the breach which was constantly widening between these two powerful personages he was preparing to make use of this estrangement to further what he sup-

posed to be the interests of Japan. Min Yong-whan, the most powerful of the Queen's friends, was sent to America as minister; and everything was ready for the *coup* which had undoubtedly been determined upon. From the mass of conflicting evidence, charge and counter-charge, it is difficult to escape the following conclusion. There were two different policies held by political parties in Japan as to the best way to handle the Korean question: one was what we may call the radical policy which advocated strong measures and the instant and complete overthrow of all opposition to the will of Japan in the peninsula; the other or conservative policy looked to the attainment of the same object by gradual and pacific means. It seems that the failure of Count Inouye to accomplish anything definite in the line of a settlement of internal dissensions at Seoul resulted in the appointment of Viscount Miura as an exponent of the extreme radical policy. He was supposed to do prompt work, but what that work would be, perhaps neither he nor his constituency saw clearly before his arrival on the scene. It would be going much too far to say that the assassination of the Queen was once thought of, and yet it is more than likely that those most conversant with conditions in Seoul felt that by some means or other her enormous influence must be permanently checked, and that affairs must be so managed that she should have nothing more to do in the handling of questions of state. How this was to be accomplished neither Miura nor any of his advisers knew until he came and looked over the field.

For this reason it is easy to see how the ex-regent would be the first man in Korea with whom the Japanese minister would wish to consult, and it is certain that the Taiwunkun would have but one word to say as to the solution of the difficulty. His experience of twenty years had convinced him that there was only one way to accomplish the object which the minister had in view; and while Viscount Miura naturally shrunk from adopting that course it would seem he too was at last convinced that it was the only feasible plan. That he actually advised it in the

first instance, we do not believe; but that he fell in with the plan which others suggested and which they offered to carry through without his personal intervention there can be no doubt whatever. Nor can there be any question as to where the responsibility for the tragedy rests; not with the Japanese government, surely, except in so far as its appointment of such a man to the difficult post of minister to Seoul may reflect upon its wisdom.

It has sometimes been hinted that Count Inouye upon his return to Japan advocated some such policy as that which was carried out by Marquis Miura, but there is nothing to indicate that this is other than a libel, for the whole career of that able statesman gives the lie to such suspicions, and his despatches to his government show the very opposite spirit from that intimated in these slanderous reports. For instance, we have the extract from his reports, read in the Japanese parliament, in which he says:

"On one occasion the Queen observed to me, 'It was a matter of extreme regret to me that the overtures made by me toward Japan were rejected. The Taiwunkun, on the other hand, who showed his unfriendliness toward Japan, was assisted by the Japanese minister to rise in power.' In reply to this I gave as far as I could an explanation of these things to the Queen, and after allaying her suspicions I further explained that it was the true and sincere desire of the Emperor and government of Japan to place the independence of Korea on a firm basis, and in the meantime to strengthen the royal house of Korea. In the event of any member of the royal family, or indeed any Korean, attempting treason against the royal house, I gave the assurance that the Japanese government would not fail to protect the royal house even by force of arms."

This unequivocal promise of protection was made by Count Inouye just before his departure for Japan, and we do not and cannot believe that he expressed anything but his honest sentiments and those of the government that was back of him. It has been urged that the action of the Japanese government in

acquitting Viscount Miura in the face of the evidence given proves the complicity of that government in the outrage and its previous knowledge that it was to be perpetrated, but this does not necessarily follow. That government was doubtless unwilling to stultify itself by acknowledging that its accredited minister to Korea was actually guilty of the crime indicated in the charge. This attempt to evade the responsibility was of course futile. There was no escape from the dilemma in which that government was placed, but the deduction that it was *particeps criminis* in the events of October 8 is unbelievable. It was the work of Viscount Miura and of his staff, and of them alone, as is shown by the decision of the Japanese Court of Preliminary Inquiry, which court sat in Hiroshima in January, 1896.

That court found, among other things, that Viscount Miura upon his arrival in Seoul soon became aware that the Korean court, and especially the Queen's faction, was placing every obstacle in the way of reform, and felt that an effective remedy should be applied. The Taiwunkun asked the Japanese for assistance in effecting a radical change, and it was decided to grant it. But first the ex-regent was asked to sign an agreement not to interfere unwarrantedly in political matters in the future. A plot was then formed to take the palace by force, murder the Queen, hold the person of the King, and thus control the situation. This plot was definitely sanctioned and urged by Viscount Miura and his secretary.

At three o'clock on the morning of October 8, a large party of Japanese, including a number of *soshi,* together with several Koreans, went to the residence of the Taiwunkun, near the river, and in company with him proceeded toward Seoul. When they were about to start, their leader exhorted them to deal with the " fox " as necessity might dictate, the obvious meaning being that the Queen should be killed. About dawn the whole party entered the palace by the Kwang-wha gate, and at once proceeded to the royal apartments.

At this point the recital of the facts abruptly stops, and the

court goes on to state that, in spite of these proven facts, there is not sufficient evidence to prove that any of the Japanese actually committed the crime which had been contemplated, and all the accused are discharged.

It is very much to the credit of the Japanese authorities that they frankly published these incriminating facts, and did not attempt to suppress them. Their action discharging the accused was a candid statement that, in spite of the actual proof which they adduced, it would not be possible to punish the perpetrators of the outrage, for Miura had been sent as the accredited minister of Japan, and his acts, though unforeseen by his superiors, could not but partake of an official character, and therefore the onus of the affair must fall on the Japanese government. This is the effect that was produced in the public mind, and, while the Japanese government as such must be acquitted of any intention or desire to secure the assassination of the Queen, yet it can scarcely escape the charge of criminal carelessness, in according to the Korean court a representative who would so far forget the dignity of his position as to plan and encourage the perpetration of such a revolting crime.

The description of the scene, as given by the Hiroshima court, stops abruptly with the entrance into the palace before the actual business of the day began. It is necessary for us to take up the narration from that point. The buildings occupied by the King and Queen were near the back of the palace enclosure, almost half a mile from the front gate, so that the Japanese and Korean force, accompanied by the ex-regent, had to traverse a long succession of passageways through a great mass of buildings before reaching the object of their search. Some of the palace guard were met on the way and easily pushed aside, some of them being killed, among whom was Colonel Hong. When the Japanese arrived at the buildings occupied by their majesties, a part of them formed about it in military order, guarding all the approaches, but they did not enter the building. A crowd of Japanese civilians, commonly believed to be *soshi,* and a

considerable number of Koreans, all heavily armed, rushed into the royal quarters. A part of the crowd went into the presence of the King, brandishing their weapons, but without directly attacking his person nor that of the Crown Prince, who stood beside him. Another part of the crowd ranged through the apartments of the Queen, seizing palace women and demanding information as to the whereabouts of the Queen. They met Yi Kyung-jik, the Minister of the Household, before the Queen's apartments and at once cut him down, but he managed to crawl into the presence of the King, where he was despatched by the Japanese. The Queen was found in one of the rooms which constituted her suite, and was ruthlessly butchered. It is impossible to state with absolute certainty whether the blow was struck by a Korean or by a Japanese, but the overwhelming probability is that it was done by one of the armed Japanese.

The body was wrapped in some sort of blanket, saturated with petroleum, and burned at the edge of a pine grove immediately to the east of the pond which lies in front of the royal quarters.

The royal family had been aware for two days of the danger which threatened. The guards at the palace had been reduced, the arms had been taken away, and the movements of Japanese troops were very suspicious. The King advised the Queen to go to a place of safety, and she said she would do so if the Queen Dowager would also go, but the latter refused. Chong Pyung-ha, who had been raised to high office through the patronage of the Queen, but who had struck hands with the Japanese, urged with great insistence that there was no danger to her Majesty's person, and it was the confidence expressed by this traitor that did the most to set at rest the apprehension of the King and the Queen.

During all the time leading up to these events the palace guard was in charge of General Dye, but his efforts to carry out the wishes of his Majesty were continually thwarted, and the guard was merely a nominal one.

At about the time when the Queen was being killed, the Taiwunkun came into the presence of the King, and took the direction of affairs at the court. As might be supposed, both the King and the Crown Prince were in anything but an enviable frame of mind. They had been pushed about and insulted by low Japanese, and felt that their lives were momentarily in danger. Colonel Yi Kyung-jik, the Minister of the Household Department, had taken his stand at the door of the Queen's apartments, and had there been cut down by the Japanese or Koreans, but succeeded in making his way, desperately wounded, into the presence of the King. He was there stabbed to death by the Japanese before the eyes of his Majesty. This did not tend to reassure the King and the Crown Prince, but the coming of the Taiwunkun tended to quiet them somewhat. Of course they had no idea as yet that the Queen had been despatched.

Before dawn began to break the King learned that Japanese troops were pouring into the barracks in front of the palace, and, as some semblance of order had been restored in the immediate presence of his Majesty, a note was sent in haste to the Japanese minister, asking what all this meant. The messenger found Miura and Sugimura already up and dressed, and sedan chairs at the door. Miura told the messenger that he had heard that troops had been marched to the barracks, but did not know why. The minister and his secretary thereupon proceeded rapidly to the palace. Immediately upon their arrival all the disturbance suddenly quieted down, and the *soshi* dispersed and left the palace grounds. The Japanese minister and secretary immediately sought an audience with his Majesty, accompanied only by an interpreter and another Japanese who had led the *soshi*. The ex-regent was also present.

Three documents were prepared by those present and placed before his Majesty for signature, one of them guaranteeing that the Cabinet should thereafter manage the affairs of the country, the second appointing Yi Cha-myun, the King's brother, as Minister of the Household in place of Yi Kyung-jik, who had just

been killed, and the third appointing a vice-Minister of the Household. These documents the King perforce signed. Thereupon all Japanese troops were removed from the palace, and only the Japanese-trained Korean troops were left as a palace-guard. Later in the day ministers of war and police were appointed in the persons of Cho Heui-yun and Kwun Yung-jin, both strong partisans of the Japanese, and doubtless privy to the attack upon the palace and the murder of the Queen. In other words, the King and court were surrounded by men every one of whom were in sympathy with the movement which had been planned by Viscount Miura.

Very early in the morning, while it was still scarcely daylight, Mr. Waeber, the Russian *Chargé d'Affaires,* and Dr. Allen, the American *Chargé d'Affaires ad interim,* came to the palace and sought audience with the King, but were told that the King was unwell and could not see them. They insisted, however, and succeeded in seeing his Majesty, who told them that he still had hopes that the Queen had escaped, and besought their friendly offices to prevent further trouble. Other foreign representatives were received later in the day.

It soon became evident that the Japanese authorities intended to deny any responsibility for the outrages committed. Miura stated in his despatches to his government that the origin of the *émeute* was a conflict between the Japanese-drilled Korean troops, who desired to lay a complaint before his Majesty, and the palace guards, who tried to prevent their entrance into the palace. Miura even sought to strengthen his disclaimer by obtaining from the newly appointed Minister of War a definite official statement that the rumours of his (Miura's) complicity in the affair were without foundation. The document that the Minister of War sent in reply proved altogether too much and defeated its own purpose, for it stated baldly that there was not a single Japanese in the palace on the night of the 8th of October when the Queen was murdered. As this minister was a creature of the Japanese, and as the presence of Japanese in

the palace was clearly proved subsequently, it is evident that Miura, by this sort of trickery, only succeeded in further implicating himself.

On the 9th, the day after the *émeute*, a full Cabinet was appointed, composed entirely of Japanese sympathisers, but, with one or two exceptions, they were not privy to the assassination of the Queen, though they were willing to profit by that crime in accepting office at the hands of the perpetrators.

One would have supposed that the enemies of the Queen would have been satisfied by her death, but not so. On the 11th, three days after her assassination, an edict, purporting to have originated with his Majesty and signed by the full Cabinet, appeared in the "Court Gazette." In it the Queen is charged with having interfered in public matters, disturbed the government and put the dynasty in peril. It is stated that she has disappeared, and that her guilt is excessive; therefore she is deposed from her rank as Queen and reduced to the level of the lowest class.

There can be no doubt that this edict is fraudulent. The King never gave his consent to it, and several of the members of the Cabinet knew nothing about it, notably Sim Sang-hun, who had already thrown up his position and run away, and Pak Chöng-yang, who denounced the nefarious business and resigned. It was put through by a few of the Cabinet who were thoroughly subservient to the Japanese. The Japanese minister, in reply to the announcement of the Queen's degradation, affected to sympathise with the Korean government, but thought it was done for the good of the state. The United States representative refused to recognise the decree as coming from his Majesty, and in this he was seconded by all the other foreign representatives except one.

Meanwhile the Japanese government began to learn something of the truth in regard to the Queen's death, and felt called upon to defend itself from the charge of complicity in the outrage through its accredited minister. Consequently it recalled

Miura and Sugimura, and upon their arrival in Japan they were arrested and charged with instigating the outrage. The fact of their arrest and trial was a distinct disclaimer on the part of the Japanese government that it was accessory to the crime; and, in spite of the utter inadequacy of the trial and its almost ludicrous termination, we hold to the theory that the Japanese government was not a party to the crime, excepting in so far as the appointment of such a man as Miura can be called complicity.

But the vigorous action of Japan in arresting Miura and putting him on trial had a strong influence upon the course of events in Korea. The Korean public and all the foreign representatives were demanding that the occurrences of the 8th of October should be investigated, and the responsibility for the murder of the Queen placed where it rightly belonged. This itself bore strongly upon the Cabinet, but when, in addition to this, the Japanese government itself seemed to be weakening, and it appeared that Miura's acts would prove to have been unauthorised, things began to look rather black for the men who were enjoying office solely through Miura's influence, and, although the fiction was still maintained that the Queen was not dead but in hiding somewhere, the situation became more and more strained, until at last it became evident even to the Cabinet that something must be done to relieve the situation. Accordingly, on the 26th of November, the foreign representatives and several other foreigners were invited to the palace, and it was announced in the presence of his Majesty that Cho Heui-yun, the Minister of War, and Kwun Yung-jin, the Chief of Police, were dismissed, that the edict degrading the Queen was rescinded, and that the facts connected with the attack on the palace would be investigated by the Department of Justice and all guilty persons tried and punished. At the same time the death of her Majesty was formally announced.

The position of his Majesty during the months succeeding the attack was anything but comfortable. He had no voice in

the direction of affairs, and he considered himself practically a prisoner in the hands of the Cabinet. He even feared for his life, and for weeks ate no food except what was brought to him in a locked box from friends outside the palace. He had requested that two or three foreigners should come to the palace each night and be at hand in case of trouble, feeling that their presence would exert a deterrent influence upon any who might plot injury to his person.

The half-way measures adopted on the 26th of November by no means satisfied those who wished to see his Majesty freed from practical durance at the hands of men thoroughly obnoxious to him, and a scheme was evolved by a number of Koreans to effect his release by forcible means. The purpose of these men was a laudable one, but the execution of it was ill-managed. On the night of the 28th, upwards of a thousand Koreans demanded entrance into the palace. They had arranged with one of the members of the palace guard, inside, to open the gate to them, but at the last moment he failed them, and they found themselves balked. The palace was in some confusion; the King had called in to his presence the three foreigners who, at his request, were on duty that night, but in spite of their assurances that his person would be protected it was only natural that excitement should run high. The crowd without were shouting wildly and attempting to scale the high wall, and the members of the Cabinet, before the King, did not know at what moment the guard might betray them to the assailants, and they knew that once betrayed they would be torn to pieces without mercy. They tried, therefore, to induce the King to remove to a distant part of the palace, where he could hide for a long time before he could be found, even though the crowd should effect an entrance. The night was bitterly cold, and the King was but lightly clad; and as the King's person was safe in any event, the foreigners who were with him opposed the move strongly, and at last were compelled to use physical force to prevent the change, which would certainly have endangered the King's life. The purpose of the Cabinet was

thus thwarted, but as the hours passed it became evident that the men outside would not be able to effect an entrance. The shouts gradually died away, and at last the crowd dispersed, leaving in the hands of the palace guard three or four men who had scaled the wall but had not been followed by their *confrères*.

In view of the attitude of the Tokyo government, the Japanese in Seoul were now entirely quiescent, and the government was standing on its own base. The Cabinet held its own by virtue of the palace guard, which was composed of the soldiers trained by the Japanese. This Cabinet and guard held together from necessity, for both knew that should their power fail they would be denounced as traitors, and under the circumstances could expect little help from the Japanese. The Cabinet had to make a show of investigating the attack of the 5th of October, and someone must be killed for having murdered the Queen. At the same time punishment was to be meted out to the principals in the attempt on the palace on the 28th of November.

Three men were arrested and charged with being directly implicated in the crime of regicide. Of these one was certainly innocent, and while the second was probably privy to the crime, being a lieutenant of the Japanese-trained troops, there was no evidence adduced to prove his actual participation in the act of assassination. As a fact, the court did not know and never discovered who the actual perpetrators were. The three men were executed before the end of the year.

Though only three men were arrested in connection with the assassination of the Queen, thirty-three men were arrested in connection with the comparatively trivial affair of the 28th of November. Their trial proceeded simultaneously with that of the other three. Two of them were condemned to death, four to exile for life, and four to three years' imprisonment. To show the kind of evidence on which these convictions were based, we will cite the case of Prince Yi Cha-sun, who was proved to have gotten hold of some compromising documents and to have shown them

to the King only, instead of to *the proper authorities,* namely, of course, the Cabinet. On these grounds he was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

December and January saw matters move to an inevitable climax. The Cabinet forced upon the people the edict ordering the cutting off of the top-knot, the distinctive mark of Korean citizenship. The whole country was in a ferment, and the people, almost to a man, were gnashing their teeth at the Cabinet. The finding of the Hiroshima court claimed to have freed Miura and his fellows from blame, and it was rumoured that several of them were to return to Korea to take office under the government. It was perfectly evident, therefore, that the grip of the Japanese upon the King through the Gaoler Cabinet was tightening, and that there was no escape from it except through heroic measures. These measures the King was prepared to adopt rather than longer endure the humiliating position to which he seemed condemned.

He determined to find asylum in the Russian legation. C. Waeber was the Russian minister, a pronounced friend of the dead Queen and a man of great ability. Just how he was approached and his consent gained to the King's scheme is not generally known; but in view of subsequent events, and the part that Russia intended to play in Korea, it is easy to see how the Russian representative would welcome an opportunity to do the King such a signal service, and one which was of such a personal character as to render it certain that it would never be forgotten.

The plan was carried out successfully in every detail. Women's chairs were caused to be sent in and out the palace gates at frequent intervals by day and night, until the guards had become quite accustomed to them. Then on the night of the 11th of February the King and the Crown Prince without escort slipped by the guards in common women's chairs, and were taken directly to the Russian legation, where they were courteously received and given the best portion of the legation

building. This act was, of course, a grievous lapse from the dignity that befits a king, but under the circumstances there is much to say by way of excuse. On the whole, it must be considered a mistake so far as the country at large is concerned, for it set in motion a new set of factors which probably did more harm than the temporary enforced seclusion of the King could have done. It acted as a potent factor in embittering the Japanese against Russia, and opened the door for Russian intrigue, which finally hastened if it did not actually cause the Russo-Japanese war. Had Japan been able to preserve the predominance which she held in Korea just after the China-Japan war, she might have looked with more or less complacency upon the Russian aggression in Manchuria, but when Korea itself became disputed ground the war was inevitable.

At seven o'clock on the morning of the 11th of February the King and the Crown Prince entered the Russian legation. Several hours elapsed before the Cabinet in the palace became aware of the fact. During that interval active operations were going on at the Russian legation. The organisation of a new Cabinet was hastened by summoning from various parts of the city such officials as the King could trust. Pak Chöng-yang was made prime minister. No time was lost in putting out a royal edict deprecating the necessity of taking refuge in a foreign legation, promising to punish the real authors of the Queen's assassination, rescinding the order for cutting the top-knots. This was posted on the gates of the legation and at various points throughout the city.

CHAPTER X

THE INDEPENDENCE CLUB

WHEN the public awoke to the momentous fact, a thrill of excitement and generally of approval went through the whole population of Seoul. The city hummed with excited humanity. The streets swarmed with the crowds bent upon watching the course of such stirring events.

Later in the day the King put forth an edict calling upon the soldiers to rally to his support, and urging that the members of the Cabinet should be seized and turned over to the proper authorities for trial.

As soon as it became known in the palace that the King had fled, the three leading members of the Cabinet saw that their lives were forfeited. O Yun-jung managed to escape to the country, but was set upon and killed by the people; Cho Heui-yun escaped; Yu Kil-jun was spirited away to Japan by the Japanese; but Kim Hong-jip and Chöng Pyung-ha were seized by the Korean soldiers, and immediately rushed by the crowd and killed. Their bodies were hauled to Chong-no, where they were stamped upon, kicked, bitten and stoned by a half-crazed rabble for hours. A Japanese who happened to be passing was set upon by the crowd and killed, and several foreigners drawn to the spot by curiosity were threatened.

To say that the Japanese were nonplussed by this *coup* on the part of the King would be to put it very mildly. All their efforts to consolidate their power in Korea, and to secure there some fruit of the victory in the war just finished, had been worse than thrown away. The King had cast himself into the arms of Russia, and the whole Korean people were worked

up to a white heat against Japan, comparable only with the feelings elicited by the invasion of 1592. It was a very great pity, for Japan was in a position to do for Korea infinitely more than Russia would do. The interests of Korea and Japan were identical, or at least complementary, and the mistake which Japan made in the latter half of 1895 was one whose effects will require decades to efface.

But the Japanese authorities, though thrown into consternation by this radical movement of his Majesty, did not give up hope of mending matters. The Japanese minister saw the King at the Russian legation, and urged upon him every possible argument for returning to the palace. His Majesty, however, being now wholly relieved from anxiety as to his personal safety, enjoyed the respite too thoroughly to cut it short, and so politely refused to change his place of residence. A large number of Japanese in Seoul became convinced that Japan had hopelessly compromised herself, and left the country, but the Japanese government itself by no act or word granted that her paramount influence in the peninsula was impaired, and with admirable *sang froid* took up the new line of work imposed upon her by the King's peculiar action, meanwhile putting down one more score against Russia, to be reckoned with later.

Now that it was possible, the King hastened to order a new investigation of the circumstances attending the death of the Queen. It was feared that this would result in a very sweeping arrest of Koreans, and the punishment of many people on mere suspicion, but these fears were ill-founded. The trials were carried through under the eye of Mr. Greathouse, the adviser to the law department and a man of great legal ability. Thirteen men were arrested and tried in open court without torture and with every privilege of a fair trial. One man, Yi Whi-wha, was condemned to death, four banished for life, and five for lesser periods. This dispassionate trial was not the least of the signs which pointed toward a new and enlightened era in Korean political history.

It will be remembered that ever since the previous year Dr. Philip Jaisohn had been acting as Adviser to the Privy Council. This Council enjoyed considerable power at first, but gradually fell to a secondary place; but now that new conditions had sprung up, the element combating the Russian influence took advantage of the presence of Dr. Jaisohn and other Koreans who had been educated abroad. The Russians seemed to look with complacency upon this movement, and in the spring of this year seem to have made no effort to prevent the appointment of J. McLeavy Brown, LL.D., as Adviser to the Finance Department, with large powers; which seemed to bear out the belief that the Russian minister was sincere in his statement that Russia wished the King to be quite untrammelled in the administration of his government. It is this generous policy of Mr. Waeber that is believed to have caused his transfer later to another post, to be replaced by A. de Speyer, who adopted a very different policy. However this may have been, things began to take on a very hopeful aspect in Seoul. Needed reforms were carried through; torture was abolished in the Seoul courts; a concession was given to an American company to construct a railway between Seoul and Chemulpo; Min Yong-whan was appointed special envoy to the coronation of the Czar; work was begun on the American mining concession granted the year before, various schools were founded, and the outlook on the whole was very bright indeed. It looked as if a solution had been found for the difficulties that afflicted the state, and that an era of comparatively enlightened government was opening.

For some time there had existed a more or less secret organisation among the Koreans, the single article of whose political creed was independence both from China and Japan, or, in other words, "Korea for Koreans." Now that the King had been relieved of Chinese suzerainty by the Japanese and of Japanese restraint by himself, this little society, under the leadership of Dr. Philip Jaisohn, blossomed out into what was called *The Independence Club*. The name but partially described the society, for,

while it advocated the complete independence of Korea, it still more insistently advocated a liberal government, in the shape of a genuine constitutional monarchy, in which the royal prerogative should be largely curtailed and the element of paternalism eliminated. At first the greater stress was laid upon the general principle of Korean independence, and to this the King, in the joy of his newly found freedom, heartily agreed. The royal sanction was given to the Independence Club, and it was launched upon a voyage which had no haven, but ended in total shipwreck. This club society was composed of young men, many of whom were doubtless aroused for the time being to something like patriotic fervour, but who had had no practical experience of the rocky road of Korean politics or of the obstacles which would be encountered. The cordiality of the King's recognition blinded them to the fact that the real object of their organisation, namely, the definition of the royal prerogative, was one that must eventually arouse first the suspicion and then the open hostility of his Majesty, and would become the slogan of all that army of self-seekers who saw no chance for self-aggrandisement except in the immemorial spoils system. These young men were armed with nothing but a laudable enthusiasm. They could command neither the aid of the Korean army nor the advocacy of the older statesmen, all of whom were either directly hostile to the movement or had learned caution through connection with previous abortive attempts to stem the tide of official corruption. The purpose of this club, so far as it knew its own mind, was a laudable one in theory, but the amount of persistency, courage, tact and self-restraint necessary to carry the plan to a successful issue was so immensely greater than they could possibly guess that, considering the youth and inexperience of the personnel of the society, the attempt was doomed to failure. They never clearly formulated a constructive plan by which to build upon the ruins of that system which they were bent upon destroying.

On the 7th of April the first foreign newspaper was founded

by Dr. Philip Jaisohn. It was called "The Independent," and was partly in the native character. From the first it exerted a powerful influence among the Koreans, and was one of the main factors which led to the formation of the Independence Club.

Both Japan and Russia were desirous of coming to an understanding as to Korea, and on the 14th of May there was published the Waeber-Komura Agreement, which was modified and ratified later under the name of the Lobanoff-Yamagata Agreement. According to the terms of this convention, both powers guaranteed to respect the independence of Korea, and not to send soldiers into the country except by common consent.

The summer of 1896 saw great material improvements in Seoul. The work of clearing out and widening the streets was vigorously pushed, and, although much of the work was done superficially, some permanent improvement was effected, and the "squatters" along the main streets were cleaned out, it is hoped for all time. In July the concession for building a railway between Seoul and Wiju was given to a French syndicate. From subsequent events it appears that there was no fixed determination on the part of the French to push this great engineering work to a finish, but merely to preëmpt the ground and prevent others from doing it. Russian influence doubtless accomplished this, and from that time there began to spring up the idea that Korea would be divided into two spheres of influence, the Japanese predominant in the south and the Russians in the north.

In spite of the favourable signs that appeared during the early months of 1896, and the hopes which were entertained that an era of genuine reform had been entered upon, the coming of summer began to reveal the hollowness of such hopes. The King himself was strongly conservative, and never looked with favour upon administrative changes, which tended to weaken his personal hold upon the finances of the country, and he chafed under the new order of things. In this he was encouraged by many of the leading officials, who saw in the establishment of

liberal institutions the end of their opportunities for personal power and aggrandisement. The old order of things appealed to them too strongly, and it became evident that the government was rapidly lapsing into its former condition of arbitrary and partisan control. Open and violent opposition to such harmless innovations as the wearing of foreign uniforms by the students of foreign language schools indicated too plainly the tendency of the time, and the Russian authorities did nothing to influence his Majesty in the right direction. Judging from subsequent events, it was not Russia's policy to see an enlightened administration in Seoul. The political plans of that power could be better advanced by a return to the *status quo ante.* The act of the government in substituting an independence arch in place of the former gate, outside the west gate, which commemorated Chinese suzerainty, was looked upon, and rightly, by the more thoughtful as being merely a superficial demonstration which was based upon no deeper desire than that of being free from all control or restraint except such as personal inclination should dictate. The current was setting toward a concentration of power rather than toward a healthful distribution of it, and thus those who had hailed the vision of a new and rejuvenated state were compelled to confess that it was but a mirage.

Pressure was brought to bear upon the court to remove from the Russian legation, and it was high time that such a move be made. As a matter of urgent necessity, it was considered a not too great sacrifice of dignity to go to the legation, but to make it a permanent residence was out of the question. The King was determined, however, not to go back to the palace from which he had fled. It held too many gruesome memories. It was decided to build the Myung-ye Palace in the midst of the foreign quarter with legations on three sides of it. The present King intended it as a permanent residence, and building operations were begun on a large scale, but it was not until February of the following year that his Majesty finally removed from the Russian legation to his new palace.

All during the latter half of 1896 the gulf between the independence party and the conservatives kept widening. The latter grew more and more confident and the former more and more determined. Dr. Jaisohn, in his capacity of Adviser to the Council of State, was blunt and outspoken in his advice to his Majesty, and it was apparent that the latter listened with growing impatience to suggestions which, however excellent in themselves, found no response in his own inclinations. The Minister of Education voiced the growing sentiment of the retrogressive faction in a book called "The Warp and Woof of Confucianism," in which such extreme statements were made that several of the foreign representatives felt obliged to interfere and call him to account. A chief of police was appointed who was violently anti-reform. The assassin of Kim Ok-kyun was given an important position under the government. A man who had attempted the life of Pak Yong-hyo was made Minister of Law, and on all sides were heard contemptuous comments upon the "reform nonsense" of the liberal faction. And yet in spite of this the momentum of the reform movement, though somewhat retarded, had by no means been completely stopped. The summer and autumn of this year, 1896, saw the promulgation of a large number of edicts of a salutary nature, relating to the more systematic collection of the national revenues, the reorganisation of gubernatorial and prefectural systems, the definition of the powers and privileges of provincial officials, the further regulation of the postal system, the definition of the powers of the superintendents of trade in the open ports, the abolition of illegal taxation, and the establishment of courts of law in the various provinces and in the open ports. As many of these reforms survived the collapse of the liberal party, they must be set down as definite results which justify the existence of that party and make its overthrow a matter of keen regret to those who have at heart the best interests of the country.

All this time Russian interests had been cared for sedulously. The King remained in close touch with the legation, and Colonel

Potiata and three other Russian officers were put in charge of the palace guard, while Kim Hong-nyuk, the erstwhile water-carrier, continued to absorb the good things in the gift of his Majesty. And yet the Russians with all their power did not attempt to obstruct the plans of the subjects of other powers in Korea. Mr. Stripling, a British subject, was made Adviser to the Police Department; a mining concession was granted to a German syndicate; an American was put in charge of a normal school; Dr. Brown continued to direct the work of the Finance Department, and the work on the Seoul Chemulpo Railway was pushed vigorously by an American syndicate. The Russians held in their hands the power to put a stop to much of this, but they appeared to be satisfied with holding the power without exercising it.

The first half of 1897 was characterised by three special features in Korea. The first was a continuance of so-called reforms, all of which were of a utilitarian character. A gold-mine concession was given to a German syndicate, a Chinese Language School and other schools were founded and the difficult work of cleaning out the Peking Pass was completed. It was announced that Chinnampo and Mokpo would be opened to trade in the autumn. The second feature was the steady growth of the conservative element which was eventually to resume complete control of the government. As early as May of this year the editor of the *Korean Repository* said, with truth: "The collapse is as complete as it is pathetic. After the King came to the Russian legation the rush of the reform movement could not be stayed at once nor even deflected. But soon there came the inevitable reaction. Reforms came to be spoken of less and less frequently. There was a decided movement backwards toward the old, well-beaten paths. But it was impossible to re-establish the old order of things entirely. We come then to the period of the revision of laws. Shortly after the King removed to the new palace an edict was put forth ordering the appointment of a Commission for the revision of the laws. This

was received with satisfaction by the friends of progress. This Commission contained the names of many prominent men, such as Kim Pyung-si, Pak Chöng-yang and Yi Wan-yong, as well as the names of Dr. Brown, General Greathouse, Mr. Legendre and Dr. Jaisohn." But by the 12th of April the whole thing was dropped, and the strong hopes of the friends of Korea were again dashed to the ground. The third feature of this period is the growing importance of Russian influence in Seoul. The training of the Korean army had already been taken out of Japanese hands and given to Russians, and in August thirteen more Russian military instructors were imported. It was plain that Russia meant to carry out an active policy in Korea. Russian admirals, including Admiral Alexeieff, made frequent visits to Seoul, and at last Russia made public avowal of her purposes when she removed Mr. Waeber, who had served her so long and faithfully here, and sent Mr. A. de Speyer to take his place. There was an immediate and ominous change in the tone which Russia assumed. From the very first, De Speyer showed plainly that he was sent here to impart a new vigour to Russo-Korean relations; that things had been going too slow. It is probable that complaints had been made because in spite of Russia's predominating influence at the Korean court concessions were being given to Americans, Germans and others outside. De Speyer soon showed the colour of his instructions and began a course of browbeating, the futility of which must have surprised him. It was on the 7th of September that he arrived, and within a month he had begun operations so actively that he attracted the attention of the world. In the first place he demanded a coaling station at Fusan on Deer Island, which commands the entrance to the harbour. This was a blow aimed directly at Japan and sure to be resented. It came to nothing. Then Mr. Kir Alexeieff arrived from Russia, an agent of the Finance Department in St. Petersburg. In the face of the fact that Dr. Brown was Chief Commissioner of Custom and Adviser to the Finance Department, Mr. Alexeieff was appointed by the Foreign Office as

Director of the Finance Department. But the policy of bluff which De Speyer had inaugurated was not a success; he carried it so far that he aroused the strong opposition of other powers, notably England, and before the end of the year, after only three months of incumbency, De Speyer was called away from Seoul. As we shall see, the whole of his work was overthrown in the following spring.

But we must retrace our steps a little and record some other interesting events that happened during the closing months of 1897. It was on the 17th of October that the King went to the Imperial Altar and there was crowned Emperor of Taihan. This had been some time in contemplation, and as Korea was free from foreign suzerainty she hastened, while it was time, to declare herself an empire. This step was recognised by the treaty powers within a short period, and so Korea took her place on an equality with China and Japan.

On the 21st of November the funeral ceremony of the late Queen was held. It was a most imposing pageant. The funeral procession passed at night out of the city to the tomb, where elaborate preparations had been made, and a large number of foreigners assembled to witness the obsequies.

The situation in Korea as the year 1898 opened was something as follows. The Conservatives had things well in hand, and the Independence Club was passing on to its final effort and its final defeat. The work of such men as Dr. Jaisohn was still tolerated; but the King and the most influential officials chafed under the wholesome advice that they received, and it was evident that the first pretext would be eagerly seized for terminating a situation that was getting very awkward for both sides. The reaction was illustrated in an attack on the "Independent," by which the Korean postal department refused to carry it in the mails. The Russians had taken the bull by the horns, and were finding that they had undertaken more than they could carry through without danger of serious complications. The Russian government saw this, and recalled De Speyer in time to preserve

much of their influence in Seoul. The Emperor, being now in his own palace, but with easy access to the Russian legation, seems to have lent his voice to the checking of the reform propaganda, and in this he was heartily seconded by his leading officials. The most promising aspect of the situation was the determined attitude of the British government relative to the enforced retirement of Dr. Brown. When it became evident that a scarcely concealed plan was on foot to oust British and other foreigners in Korea, Great Britain by a single word and by a concentration of war-vessels at Chemulpo changed the whole programme of the Russians; but, as it appeared later, the Russian plans were only changed, not abandoned. So the year opened with things political in a very unsettled state. Everything was in transition. The Independents and the Russians had some idea of what they wanted, but seemed to be at sea as to the means for accomplishing it. The Conservatives alone sat still and held on, sure that in the long run they would triumph even if they could not stop the march of material progress in the cleaning of the streets and the building of railways.

February of 1898 saw the taking off of the most commanding figure in Korean public life during the nineteenth century, in the person of Prince Taiwun, the father of the Emperor, formerly regent. For almost forty years he had been more or less intimately connected with the stirring events which have marked the present reign. The things which specially marked his career are (1) the Roman Catholic persecution of 1866, (2) the determined opposition to the opening of the country to foreign intercourse, (3) the building of the Kyöngbok Palace, (4) the debasing of Korean currency, (5) the feud with the Queen's party, (6) the temporary exile in China, (7) the assassination of the Queen. Whatever may be said for or against the prince because of his policy, he remains in the minds of the people a strong, independent character, and they cannot fail to admire the man even though they have to condemn his policy. His adherents stood by him with splendid loyalty even in the

hours of his disgrace, because he was in some sense really great.

This time was characterised by curious inconsistencies. At the same time that an edict was promulgated stating that no more concessions would be granted to foreigners, the Seoul Electric Company was organised to construct a tramway and a lighting plant in Seoul. Material improvements continued parallel with, but in the opposite direction from, the policy of the government. An agreement was even entered into with an American firm for the construction of a system of water-works for Seoul at a cost of some seven million yen.

The failing hopes of the Independence Club drove it to its final place, that of protest. Memorials began to pour in, protesting against this and that. In February it complained of foreign control in Korea, directing the attack apparently upon the Russian pretensions; but if so, it was unnecessary, for by the 1st of March the Russians decided that their position was untenable, or that a temporary withdrawal of pressure from Seoul would facilitate operations in other directions, and so, under cover of a complaint as to the vacillating policy of the Korean government, they proposed to remove Mr. Alexeieff from his uncomfortable position *vis-à-vis* Dr. Brown and also take away all the military instructors. Perhaps they were under the impression that this startling proposal would frighten the government into making protestations that would increase Russian influence here; but if so, they were disappointed, for the government promptly accepted their proposition and dispensed with the services of these men. No doubt the government had come to look with some anxiety upon the growing influence of Russia here, and with the same oscillatory motion as of yore made a strong move in the opposite direction when the opportunity came. The Korean government has been nearly as astute as Turkey in playing off her " friends " against each other.

Just one month later, the 12th of April, N. Matunine relieved Mr. de Speyer, the Russo-Korean bank closed its doors, the Rus-

sian military and other officers took their departure, and a very strained situation was relieved for the time being.

The summer of this year furnished Seoul with some excitement in the shape of a discovered conspiracy to force the King to abdicate, place the Crown Prince on the throne, and institute a new era in Korean history. The plot, if such it may be called, was badly planned and deservedly fell through. It was one of the foolish moves called out by the excitement engendered in the Independence movement. An Kyung-su, ex-president of the Independence Club, was the party mainly implicated, and he saved himself only by promptly decamping and putting himself into the hands of the Japanese.

August saw the fall of Kim Hong-nyuk, the former Russian interpreter, who ruffled it so proudly at court on account of his connection with the Russian legation. For a year he had a good time of it and amassed great wealth; but when the Russians withdrew their influence in March of this year, Kim lost all his backing, and thenceforward his doom was as sure as fate itself. The genuine noblemen whose honours he had filched were on his track, and in August he was accused, deposed and banished. This did not satisfy his enemies, however; but an opportunity came when, on the 10th of September, an effort was made to poison the Emperor and the Crown Prince. The attempt came near succeeding, and in the investigation which followed one of the scullions deposed that he had been instructed by a friend of Kim Hong-nyuk to put something into the coffee. How Kim, away in banishment, could have had anything to do with it would be hard to tell. He may have conceived the plan, but the verdict of a calm and dispassionate mind must be that he probably knew nothing about it at all. However, in such a case someone must suffer. The criminal *must* be found; and it is more than probable that those who hated Kim Hong-nyuk thought he would make an excellent scapegoat. He was tried, condemned and executed.

The month of September witnessed better things than these, however. The Japanese obtained their concession for the Seoul-

Fusan Railway, — an event of great importance every way, and one that will mean much to Korea.

In September the Independence Club determined that it would be well to put forward a programme of work in place of the merely destructive criticism which had for some time characterised its policy. An appeal was made to the general public to assemble, in order to suggest reforms. Whether this was wise or not is a question. A popular assembly in Korea is hardly capable of coming to wise conclusions or to participate in plans for constructive statesmanship. In addition to this an appeal to the people was inevitably construed by the Conservatives as a desperate measure which invited revolution. In a sense they were justified in so thinking, for the general populace of Korea never have risen in protest unless the evils under which they are suffering have driven them to the last court of appeal, mob law. The move was in the direction of democracy, and no one can judge that the people of Korea are ready for any such thing.

However this may be, a mass meeting was held at Chong-no, to which representatives of all classes were called. The following articles were formulated and presented to the Cabinet for imperial sanction:

1. Neither officials nor people shall depend upon foreign aid, but shall do their best to strengthen and uphold the imperial power.

2. All documents pertaining to foreign loans, the hiring of foreign soldiers, the granting of concessions, etc., in fact every document drawn up between the Korean government and a foreign party or firm, shall be signed and sealed by all the Ministers of State and the President of the Privy Council.

3. Important offenders shall be punished only after they have been given a public trial and ample opportunity to defend themselves.

4. To his Majesty shall belong the power to appoint Ministers, but in case a majority of the Cabinet disapproves of the Emperor's nominee he shall not be appointed.

5. All sources of revenue and methods of raising taxes shall be placed under the control of the Finance Department, no other department, officer or corporation being allowed to interfere therewith; and the annual estimates and balances shall be made public.

6. The existing laws and regulations shall be enforced without fear or favour.

It will be seen that several of these measures strike directly at powers which have been held for centuries by the King himself, and it cannot be supposed that his Majesty would listen willingly to the voice of the common people when they demanded such far-reaching innovations. The whole thing was utterly distasteful to him, but the united voice of the people is a serious matter. These demands were not such as would involve any immediate changes; they all looked to the future. So it was an easy matter simply to comply with the demands and wait for the public feeling to subside. On the last day of September his Majesty ordered the carrying out of these six propositions.

The trouble was that the Conservatives felt that they had not sufficient physical power to oppose a popular uprising. The temporary concession was made with no idea of real compliance, and was immediately followed by measures for securing a counter demonstration. The instrument selected for this purpose was the old-time Peddlers' Guild. This was a defunct institution, but the name survived, and the Conservatives used it to bring together a large number of men who were ready for any sort of work that would mean pay. These were organised into a company whose duty it was to run counter to all popular demonstrations like those which had just been made. No sooner was this hireling band organised than his Majesty, in pursuance of the hint dropped some months before by the president of the Independence Club, ordered the disbanding of the club. From this time on the Independence Club was no longer recognised by the government, and was an illegal institution, by the very terms of the unfortunate admission of its president that the Emperor

could at any time disband it by imperial decree. Mr. Yun Chi-ho had by this time come to see that the club was running to dangerous extremes, and was likely to cause serious harm; and he and others worked with all their power to curb the excitement and secure rational action on the part of the members of the club. But the time when such counsels could prevail had already passed. The club knew that the principles it advocated were correct, and it was angry at the stubborn opposition that it met. It was ready to go to any lengths to secure its ends. Passion took the place of judgment, and the overthrow of the opposition loomed larger in its view than the accomplishment of its rational ambitions.

Instead of dispersing in compliance with the imperial order, the assembled Independents went in a body to the police headquarters and asked to be arrested. This is a peculiarly Korean mode of procedure, the idea being that if put on trial they would be able to shame their adversaries; and incidentally it embarrassed the administration, for the prisons would not suffice to hold the multitude that clamoured for incarceration. The crowd was altogether too large and too determined for the peddlers to attack, and another concession had to be made. The Independents, for it can no longer be called the Independent Club, offered to disperse on condition that they be guaranteed freedom of speech. The demand was immediately complied with; anything to disperse that angry crowd which under proper leadership might at any moment do more than make verbal demands. So on the next day an imperial decree granted the right of free speech. This concession, likewise, was followed by a hurried muster of all the peddlers and their more complete organisation. Backed by official aid and imperial sanction, they were prepared to come to blows with the people who should assemble for the purpose of making further demands upon the Emperor.

The Conservatives now deemed themselves strong enough to try conclusions with the outlawed club, and before daylight of the 5th of November seventeen of the leading men of the Independence Club were arrested and lodged in jail. Mr. Yun, the

president, narrowly escaped arrest. It was afterwards ascertained that the plan of the captors was to kill the president of the club before he could receive aid from the enraged people.

When morning came and the arrest became known, the city hummed like a bee-hive. A surging crowd was massed in front of the Supreme Court, demanding loudly the release of the prisoners who had been accused, so the anonymous placards announced, of conspiring to establish a Republic! Again the popular feeling was too strong for the courage of the peddler thugs, and they remained in the background. The agitation continued all that day and the next and the next, until the authorities were either frightened into submission or, deeming that they had shown the Independents a glimpse of what they might expect, released the arrested men. But the Independents, so far from being cowed, hailed this as a vindication of their policy, and attempted to follow up the defeat of the Conservatives by demanding the arrest and punishment of the people who had played the trick upon the club. As these men were very prominent officials and had the ear of the Emperor, it was not possible to obtain the redress demanded. So the month of November wore away in a ferment of excitement. Popular meetings were frequent, but the crowd had not the determination to come to conclusions with the government. The Conservatives saw this, and with utmost nicety gauged the resisting power of the malcontents. The offensive tactics of the latter were confined merely to free speech, and the Conservatives determined to see what they would do when on the defensive. Accordingly on the morning of the 21st of November a band of ruffians, the so-called peddlers, attacked the people who had gathered, as usual, to discuss the stirring questions of the times. Weapons were used, and a number of people were injured. The Independents had never contemplated the use of force, and this brutal assault aroused the ire of the whole people, most of whom had not as yet taken sides. Serious hand-to-hand fights occurred in various parts of the city, and the peddlers, conscious that even their most murderous attacks would

be condoned in high places, attempted to whip the people into something like quietude.

On the 26th of November, in the midst of this chaotic state of things, the Emperor granted a great general audience outside the great gate of the palace. The Independence Club was there in force, and foreign representatives and a large number of other foreign residents. It was a little Runnymede, but with a different ending. Yun Chi-ho was naturally the spokesman of the Independence party. He made a manly and temperate statement of the position of his constituents. He denounced the armed attacks of the peddlers upon people who intended no violence but only desired the fulfilment of solemnly made pledges. He called to account those who imputed to the Independence Club traitorous designs. He urged that the legal existence of the club should be again established by imperial decree, and that the six measures so definitely and distinctly promised by his Majesty should be carried out. There was no possible argument to oppose to these requests, and the Emperor promised to shape the policy of the government in line with these suggestions. Again it was mere promise, made to tide over an actual and present difficulty. The Independence party should have recognised this. The Emperor was surrounded by men inimical to the reform programme; they had the police and the army back of them as well as the peddlers. The Independence party had not a single prominent representative in any really responsible and influential government office. They simply had right and the precarious voice of Korean popular feeling behind them. What was necessary was a campaign of education. The programme advocated was one that could be carried out only under a government whose personnel was at least approximately up to the standard of that programme. This could be claimed of only two or three members of the Independence Club. Having secured this public promise of his Majesty, the club should have waited patiently to see what would happen, and if the promises were not kept they should have waited and worked for a time when public sentiment among the leading men would

compel reform. But as Mr. Yun himself confesses, "The popular meetings had gone beyond the control of the Independence Club, and in the face of strong advice to the contrary, they were resumed on the 6th of December, and their language became careless and impudent. On the 16th of December the Privy Council recommended the recall of Pak Yong-hyo from Japan. The popular meeting had the imprudence to indorse this action. The more conservative portion of the people revolted against the very mention of the name. Suspicion was excited that the popular agitations had been started in the interests of Pak Yong-hyo, and they instantly lost the sympathy of the people." The enemies of the liberal party had probably used this argument to its fullest extent, and when it was seen that the Independence movement had at last been deprived of its strongest support, the popular voice, its enemies came down upon it with cruel force. In spite of voluble promises to the contrary, large numbers of the reform party were arrested and thrown into prison; not, to be sure, on the charge of being members of this party, but on trumped-up charges of various kinds, especially that of being accessory to the plan of bringing back Pak Yong-hyo. And thus came to an end a political party whose aims were of the highest character, whose methods were entirely peaceable, but whose principles were so far in advance of the times that from the very first there was no human probability of success.

The year 1899 opened with political matters in a more quiet state than for some years past, owing to the violent repression of the Independence Club and the liberal movement. The judgment of the future will be that at this point Japan made a serious mistake of omission. The aims and purposes of the Independence party were directly in line with Japanese interests here, and if that powerful government had actively interested itself in the success of the movement, and had taken it for granted that the plan was to be definitely carried out, the succeeding years would have made very different history than they did. But during all this time Japan seems to have retired into comparative quietude,

perhaps because she saw the approach of her inevitable struggle with Russia, and was not willing to hasten matters by coming into premature conflict with the northern power in Korea, pending the completion of her preparations for the supreme struggle.

Through all this period Russian influence was quietly at work securing its hold upon the Korean court and upon such members of the government as it could win over. The general populace was always suspicious of her, however, and always preferred the rougher hand of Japan to the soft but heavy hand of Russia. The progress of the Russian plans was illustrated when, in January of 1899, a Mission of the Greek Church was established in Seoul.

Before going forward into the new century we should note some of the more important material advances that Korea had made. Railway concessions for some six hundred miles of track had been granted, half to Japanese and half to a French syndicate; several new and important ports had been opened, bringing the total number up to ten, inclusive of Seoul and Pyeng-yang; mining concessions had been given to Americans, English, Germans, French and Japanese, two of which had proved at least reasonably successful; timber and whaling concessions had been given to Russians on the east side of the peninsula, and important fishing rights had been given to the Japanese; an attempt at a general system of education had been made throughout the country, and the work of publishing text-books was being pushed; students were sent abroad to acquire a finished education, and legations at all the most important political centres were established; an attempt at a better currency had been made, though it was vitiated by official corruption and the operations of counterfeiters; trade had steadily increased, and the imports and exports of Korea passed beyond the negligible stage; an excellent postal system had been inaugurated under foreign supervision, and Korea had entered the Postal Union.

Thus it will be seen that, in spite of all domestic political complications and discouragements, the country was making

definite advance along some lines. The leaven had begun to work, and no conservatism on the part of the public leaders could stop the ferment.

The necrology of the closing year of the century contains the names of Mr. Legendre and Mr. Greathouse, the latter of whom, as Legal Adviser to the government, did excellent work in his department, and was recognised by his employers as an able and efficient man in his official capacity.

CHAPTER XI

RUSSIAN INTRIGUE

THE return to Seoul of M. Pavlow on the 15th of January, 1900, marked the definite beginning of that train of events which led up to the declaration of war by the Japanese in 1904. The Russians had been induced, two years previously, to remove the heavy pressure which they had brought to bear upon the government, but it was only a change of method. They were now to adopt a policy of pure intrigue, and, by holding in power Koreans who were hostile to the Japanese, to harass and injure Japanese interests in every way possible.

At this same time we see a clear indication of the trend of events in the return to Korea of An Kyung-su and Kwan Yung-jin, two of the best men that late years had developed in Korea. They had been charged with connection with the plot to compass the abdication of his Majesty, and had taken refuge in Japan. Now, on the promise of the government that they should have a perfectly fair trial, and on the guarantee of protection by the Japanese, they returned boldly to Korea and presented themselves for trial. They were strong men and they had to be reckoned with. They openly favoured Japanese influence and the reforms that that influence was supposed to embody. In fact, they were thoroughly in sympathy with the best motives of the defunct Independence Club. An Kyung-su returned on the 15th of January and was held in detention until the 16th of May, when Kwan Yung-jin returned. They were to stand a fair trial, but on the night of the 27th of May they were both strangled secretly in the prison. No more dastardly crime ever stained the annals of this or any other government. Induced to return

on the promise of a fair trial, they were trapped and murdered. The reactionists looked upon this as a signal victory, and indeed it was such, for it indicated clearly that a man was not safe even when he had the guarantee of the Japanese authorities. Nor would it be difficult to indicate the source from which the government obtained the courage thus to flout the Japanese.

As the summer came on, all interest in things Korean was held in suspension, while the great uprising in China swelled to such monstrous proportions, and the investment of Peking and the siege of the foreign legations there left the world no time to care for or think of other things. There were fears that the Boxer movement would be contagious and that it would spread to Korea. Indeed it was reported in the middle of July that the infection had reached northern Korea; but fortunately this proved false.

In spite of the reactionary policy of the government, progress continued to be made on certain lines, just as the momentum of a railway train cannot be checked the moment the brakes are applied. A distinguished French legalist was employed as Adviser to the Law Department; mining concessions were granted to British, French and Japanese syndicates; the Government Middle School was established; the Seoul-Chemulpo Railway was formally opened; a French teacher was engaged to open a School of Mines; a representative was sent to the great Paris Exposition.

This year, 1900, was the heydey of another *parvenu* in the person of Kim Yung-jun. He was a man without any backing except his own colossal effrontery. He had acquired influence by his ability to get together considerable sums of money irrespective of the methods employed. Scores of wealthy men were haled to prison on one pretext or another, and were released only upon the payment of a heavy sum. He was a man of considerable force of character, but, like so many adventurers in Korea, was lured by his successes into a false feeling of security. He forgot that the history of this country is full

of just such cases, and that they inevitably end in violent death. Even the fate of Kim Hong-nyuk did not deter him, though his case was almost the counterpart of that victim of his own overweening ambitions. Against Kim Yung-jun was ranged the whole nobility of the country, who waited with what patience they could until his power to extort money began to wane, and then fell upon him like wolves upon a belated traveller at night. But it was not until the opening of the new year, 1901, that he was deposed, tried and killed in a most horrible manner. After excruciating tortures, he was at last strangled to death.

But even as this act was perpetrated, and the fate of all such adventurers was again illustrated, another man of the same ilk was pressing to the fore. This was Yi Yong-ik, who had once been the *major domo* of one of the high officials, and in that capacity had learned how to do all sorts of interesting, if unscrupulous, things. He was prominent in a felonious attempt to cheat the ginseng farmers of Song-do out of thousands, back in the eighties. He was an ignorant boor, and, even when rolling in opulence, failed to make himself presentable in dress or manner. He was praised by some for his scorn of luxury, and because he made no attempt to hoard the money that he bled from the veins of the people. The reason he did not hoard it was the same that makes the farmer sow his seed, that he may reap a hundred-fold. Yi Yong-ik sowed his golden seed in fertile soil, and it yielded him a thousand-fold.

One of his favourite methods of obtaining money for his patron was to cause the arrest of shoals of former prefects who, for one cause or another, had failed to turn into the public treasury the complete amount nominally levied upon their respective districts. These arrears went back several years, and many of them were for cause. Either famine or flood or some other calamity had made it impossible for the people to pay the entire amount of their taxes. There were many cases, without doubt, in which it was right to demand the money from the ex-prefects, for they had "eaten" it themselves; but there

were also many cases in which it was a genuine hardship. Literally, hundreds of men were haled before a court and made to pay over large sums of money, in default of which their property was seized as well as that of their relatives. In exact proportion as the huge sums thus extorted paved his way to favour in high places, in that same proportion it drove the people to desperation. The taking off of Kim Yung-jun, so far from warning this man, only opened a larger door for the exercise of his peculiar abilities, and it may be said that the official career of Yi Yong-ik began with the opening of 1901.

In March a Japanese resident of Chemulpo claimed to have purchased the whole of Roze Island in the harbour of Chemulpo. The matter made a great stir, for it was plain that someone had assumed the responsibility of selling the island to the Japanese. This was the signal for a sweeping investigation, which was so manipulated by powerful parties that the real perpetrators of the outrage were dismissed as guiltless, but a side issue which arose in regard to certain threatening letters that were sent to the foreign legations was made a peg upon which to hang the seizure, trial and execution of Kim Yung-jun, as before mentioned. Min Yung-ju was the man who sold the island to the Japanese, and he finally had to put down thirty-five thousand yen and buy it back.

Russia made steady advances toward her ultimate goal during the year 1901. In the spring some buildings in connection with the palace were to be erected, and the Chief Commissioner of Customs, J. McLeavy Brown, C. M. G., was ordered to vacate his house on the customs compound at short notice. Soldiers even forced their way into his house. This affront was a serious one, and one that the Koreans would never have dared to give had they not felt that they had behind them a power that would see them through. The British authorities soon convinced the government that such tactics could be easily met, and it had to retreat with some loss of dignity.

Many of the French gentlemen employed by the govern-

ment were thoroughly competent and rendered good service, but their presence tended to add to the tension between Japan and Russia, for it was quite plain that all their influence would be thrown in the scale on Russia's side. The attempt to loan the Korean government five million yen was pushed with desperate vigour for many months by the French, but divided counsels prevented the final consummation of the loan, and the French thus failed to secure the strong leverage which a heavy loan always gives to the creditor. Yi Yong-ik, who had become more or less of a Russian tool, was pointedly accused by the Japanese of being in favour of the French loan, but he vigorously denied it. It is generally admitted that Yi Yong-ik was something of a mystery even to his most intimate acquaintances, and just how far he really favoured the Russian side will never be known, but it is certain that he assumed a more and more hostile attitude toward the Japanese as the months went by, — an attitude which brought him into violent conflict with them, as we shall see.

Yi Yong-ik posed as a master in finance, whatever else he may or may not have been, and in 1901 he began the minting of the Korean nickel piece. No greater monetary disaster ever overtook this country. Even the desperate measures taken by the regent thirty years before had not shaken the monetary system as this did. The regent introduced the wretched five-cash piece, which did enormous harm, but that five-cash piece was of too small face value to be worth counterfeiting. The nickel was the ideal coin to tempt the counterfeiter, for its intrinsic value was not so great as to require the employment of a large amount of capital, and yet its face value was sufficient to pay for the labour and time expended. The effects of this departure will be noted in their place.

In the summer of 1901 Yi Yong-ik performed one act that, in the eyes of the people, covered a multitude of other sins. It was a year of great scarcity. The Korean farmers raised barely enough grain for domestic consumption, and in order to pre-

vent this grain from being taken out of the country the government proclaimed an embargo on its export. In spite of the fact that Japan was enjoying an unusually good crop and did not really need the Korean product, the Japanese authorities, in the interest of the Japanese exporters in Korea, brought pressure to bear upon the Korean government to raise the embargo, utterly regardless of the interests of the Korean people. As it turned out, however, the enhanced price in Korea, due to the famine, and the cutting of a full crop in Japan, prevented the export of rice. But Yi Yong-ik saw that there would inevitably be a shortage in Seoul, and with much forethought he sent and imported a large amount of Annam rice, and put it on the market at a price so reasonable that the people were highly gratified. From that time on whenever the mistakes of Yi Yong-ik were cited there was always someone to offer the extenuation of that Annam rice. It was a most clever and successful appeal to popular favour.

As the year 1901 came to a close, the tension was beginning to be felt. People were asking how much longer Japan would acquiesce in the insolent encroachments of Russia. But the time was not yet. As for material advances, the year had seen not a few. Seoul had been supplied with electric light. The Seoul-Fusan Railway had been begun. Plans for the Seoul-Wiju Railway had been drawn up. Mokpo had been supplied with a splendid sea-wall. Building had gone on apace in the capital, and even a scheme for a system of water-works for the city had been worked out and had received the sanction of the government. Education had gone from bad to worse, and at one time, when retrenchment seemed necessary, it was even suggested to close some of the schools, but better counsels prevailed, and this form of suicide was rejected.

With the opening of the year 1902 there were several indications that the general *morale* of the government was deteriorating. The first was a very determined attempt to revive the Buddhist cult. The Emperor consented to the establishment of

a great central monastery for the whole country in the vicinity of Seoul, and in it was installed a Buddhist High Priest in Chief, who was to control the whole Buddhist Church in the land. It was a ludicrous attempt, for Buddhism in Korea is dead so far as any specific influence is concerned. Mixed with the native spirit-worship, it has its millions of devotees, but it is entirely unlikely that it could ever again become a fashionable cult.

Another evidence was the constant and successful attempt to centralise the power of the government in the hands of the Emperor. The overthrow of the Independence party, whose main tenet was curtailment of the imperial prerogative, gave a new impulse to the enlargement of that prerogative, so that in the year 1902 we find almost all the government business transacted in the palace itself. The various ministers of state could do nothing on their own initiative. Everything was centred in the throne and in two or three favourites who stood near the throne. Of these Yi Yong-ik was the most prominent.

A third evidence of deterioration was the methods adopted to fill the coffers of the household treasury. The previous year had been a bad one. Out of a possible twelve million dollars of revenue only seven million could be collected. There was great distress all over the country, and the pinch was felt in the palace. Special inspectors and agents were therefore sent to the country armed with authority from the Emperor to collect money for the household treasury. These men adopted any and every means to accomplish their work, and this added very materially to the discontent of the people. The prefects were very loath to forego a fraction of the taxation, because they saw how previous prefects were being mulcted because of failure to collect the full amount, and so between the prefect and the special agents the people seemed to be promised a rather bad time. In fact, it caused such an outcry on every side that the government at last reluctantly recalled the special agents.

Early in the year the fact was made public that Korea had

entered into an agreement with Russia whereby it was guaranteed that no land at Masanpo or on the island of Kö-je, at its entrance, should ever be sold or permanently leased to any foreign power. Russia had already secured a coaling station there, and it was generally understood, the world over, that Russia had special interest in that remarkably fine harbour. Avowedly this was merely for pacific purposes, but the pains which Russia took to make a secret agreement with Korea, debarring other powers from privileges similar to those which she had acquired, naturally aroused the suspicions of the Japanese and of the Koreans themselves, those of them that had not been in the secret; and this step, inimical to Japan as it undoubtedly was, probably helped to hasten the final catastrophe. Meanwhile Russian subjects were taking advantage of the influential position of their government in Seoul, and, through ministerial influence, some glass-makers, iron-workers and weavers were employed by the government without the smallest probability of their ever doing anything in any of these lines. In fact, at about this time the government was induced to take on quite a large number of Russians and Russian sympathisers, who never were able to render any service whatever in lieu of their pay. In many cases the most cursory investigation would have shown that such would inevitably be the result. It is difficult to evade the conclusion that the government was deliberately exploited.

But at this time another and a far greater surprise was in store for the world. It was the announcement of a defensive alliance between Japan and Great Britain. By the terms of this agreement Japan and Great Britain guaranteed to insure the independence of Korea and the integrity of the Chinese Empire. The tremendous influence of this historic document was felt at once in every capital of Europe and in every capital, port and village of the Far East. It stung the lethargic to life, and it caused the rashly enthusiastic to stop and think. There can be no manner of doubt that this alliance was one of the

necessary steps in preparing for the war which Japan already foresaw on the horizon. It indicated clearly to Russia that her continued occupation of Manchuria and her continued encroachments upon Korea would be called in question at some not distant day. But she was blind to the warning. This convention bound Great Britain to aid Japan in defensive operations, and to work with her to the preservation of Korean independence and the integrity of China. It will be seen, therefore, that Japan gave up once and for all any thought that she might previously have had of impairing the independence of this country, and any move in that direction would absolve Great Britain from all obligations due to the signing of the agreement.

The year had but just begun when the operations of counterfeiters of nickel coins became so flagrant as to demand the attention of all who were interested in trade in the peninsula. Japan had most at stake and Russia had least, and this explains why the Russian authorities applauded the work of Yi Yong-ik and encouraged him to continue and increase the issue of such coinage. In March matters had come to such a pass that the foreign representatives, irrespective of partisan lines, met and discussed ways and means for overcoming the difficulty. After careful deliberation they framed a set of recommendations, which were sent to the government. These urged the discontinuance of this nickel coinage, the withdrawal from circulation of spurious coins, and stringent laws against counterfeiting. But this was of little or no avail. The government was making a five-cent coin at a cost of less than two cents, and consequently the counterfeiters, with good tools, could make as good a coin as the government, and still realise enormously on the operation. It was impossible to detect the counterfeited coins in many cases, and so there was no possibility of withdrawing them from circulation. The heavy drop in exchange was not due merely to the counterfeiting but to the fact that the intrinsic value of the coin was nothing like as much as the face value, and by an immutable law of finance, as well as of human nature, it fell to

a ruinous discount. But even this would not have worked havoc with trade if, having fallen, the discredited coinage would stay fallen, but it had the curious trick of rising and falling with such sudden fluctuations that business became a mere gamble, and the heavy interests of Japanese and Chinese merchants were nearly at a standstill.

At this point the First Bank of Japan, called the Dai Ichi Ginko, brought up a scheme for putting out an issue of special bank notes that would not circulate outside of Korea. Korea was importing much more than she exported, and the balance of trade being against her it was impossible to keep Japanese paper in the country in sufficient quantities to carry on ordinary local trade. For this reason the bank received the sanction of the Korean government to put out this issue of bank paper, which could not be sent abroad, but would be extremely useful as a local currency. This was done, and it was found to work admirably. The Koreans had confidence in this money, and it circulated freely. It had two advantages not enjoyed by any form of Korean currency, namely, it was a stable currency and suffered no fluctuations, and it was in large enough denominations to make it possible to transfer a thousand dollars from one man's pocket to that of another without employing a string of pack-ponies to carry the stuff.

The one important material improvement of the year was the adoption of a plan for the building of some thirty lighthouses on the coast of Korea. Ever since the opening up of foreign trade, the lack of proper lights, especially on the western coast, had been a matter of growing concern to shipping companies. This concern was warranted by the dangerous nature of the coast, where high tides, a perfect network of islands and oft-prevailing fogs made navigation a most difficult and dangerous matter. The fact that lighthouses ought to have been built ten years ago does not detract from the merit of those who at last took the matter in hand and pushed it to an issue.

The month of May witnessed a spectacular event in the cere-

mony of the formal opening of work on the Seoul-Wiju Railway. The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak. Neither French nor Russian money was forthcoming to push the work, and so the Korean government was invited to finance the scheme. Yi Yong-ik was made president of the company, and, if there had been a few thousand more ex-prefects to mulct, he might have raised enough money to carry the road a few miles; but it is much to be feared that his financial ability, so tenderly touched upon by the Japanese minister in his speech on that "auspicious occasion," was scarcely sufficient for the work, and the plan was not completed. There is much reason to believe that this whole operation was mainly a scheme on the part of the Russians to pre-empt the ground in order to keep the Japanese out.

As the year wore toward its close, the usurpation of numerous offices by Yi Yong-ik, and his assumption of complete control in the palace, bore its legitimate fruit in the intense hatred of four-fifths of the entire official class. He was looked upon as but one more victim destined to the same fate which had overtaken Kim Hong-nyuk and Kim Yung-jun. But in his case the difficulties were much greater. Yi Yong-ik had put away in some safe place an enormous amount of government money, and he held it as a hostage for his personal safety. Until that money was safely in the imperial treasury even the revenge would not be sweet enough to make it worth the loss. Not only so, but the whole finances of the household were in his hands, and his sudden taking off would leave the accounts in such shape that no one could make them out, and enormous sums due the department would be lost. Yi Yong-ik had fixed himself so that his life was better worth than his death, however much that might be desired. But the officiary at large cared little for this. There was no doubt that the one person who should accomplish the overthrow of the favourite, and thus bring embarrassment to the imperial purse, would suffer for it, but Korean intrigue was quite capable of coping with a little

difficulty like this. The result must be brought about by a combination so strong and so unanimous that no one would ever know who the prime mover was. This at least is a plausible theory, and the only one that adequately explains how and why the scheme miscarried. The whole course of the intrigue is so characteristically Korean, and includes so many elements of genuine humour, in spite of its object, that we will narrate it briefly. It must of course be understood that the officials were keenly on the lookout for an opportunity to get the hated favourite on the hip, and in such a manner that even his financial value to the Emperor would not avail him.

One day, while in conversation with Lady Om, the Emperor's favourite concubine, who has been mistress of the palace since the death of the Queen, Yi Yong-ik compared her to Yang Kwi-bi, a concubine of the last Emperor of the Tang dynasty in China. He intended this as a compliment, but, as his education is very limited, he was not aware that he could have said nothing more insulting; for Kwi-bi by her meretricious arts is believed to have brought about the destruction of the Tang dynasty. In some way the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister heard a rumour that something insulting had been said. They called up the nephew of Lady Om, and from him learned the damning facts. They also knew well enough that no insult had been intended, but here was a "case" to be worked to its fullest capacity. The most sanguine could not hope that the hated favourite would give them a better hold upon him than this: for the position of Lady Om was a very delicate one, and there had been a dispute on for years between the Emperor's counsellors as to the advisability of raising her to the position of Empress. A word against her was a most serious matter.

Everything was now ready for the grand *coup,* and on the 27th of November fourteen of the highest officials memorialised the throne declaring that Yi Yong-ik was a traitor and must be condemned and executed at once. His Majesty suggested a little delay, but on the evening of that day the same

men presented a second memorial couched in still stronger language, and they followed it up the next morning with a third. To their urgent advice was added that of Lady Om herself and of many other of the officials. A crowd of officials gathered at the palace gate, and on their knees awaited the decision of the Emperor. There was not a single soul of all that crowd but knew that the charge was a mere excuse, and yet it was nominally valid. It was the will of that powerful company against the will of the Emperor. The tension was too great, and his Majesty at last reluctantly consented, or at least expressed consent; but he first ordered the accused to be stripped of all his honours and to render all his accounts. This was nominally as reasonable as was the charge against the man. It was a case of "diamond cut diamond," in which the astuteness of the Emperor won. The accusers could not object to having the accused disgorge before being executed, but it was at this very point that they were foiled. Yi Yong-ik's accounts were purposely in such shape that it would have taken a month to examine them, for he alone held the key. Nothing can exceed the desperate coolness of the man under the awful ordeal. At one point, just after the acquiescence of the Emperor, the written sentence of death is said to have gone forth, but was recalled just as it was to have gone out of the palace gates, after which there would have been no recall. No man ever escaped by a narrower margin. When Yi Yong-ik presented his accounts the Emperor announced that it would take some days to straighten matters out since the accused was the only man to unravel the skein. Here was probably the crucial point in the intrigue. If the white heat of the day before had been maintained and the officials had demanded instant punishment, accounts or no accounts, the thing would have been done, but as it happened the consciousness of having won relaxed the tension to such a degree that the accused gained time. This time was utilised by calling in a Russian guard and spiriting the accused away to the Russian legation. This accomplished, his Majesty suavely

announced that the case would be considered, but that meanwhile the officials must disperse. There were further memorials, resignations *en masse,* passionate recriminations, until at last two or three officials who had held their peace saw that the game was up, and, in order to curry favour themselves, offered a counter memorial charging Yi Yong-ik's accusers with indirection. This was listened to, and the Prime Minister was deprived of his official rank. This made possible a compromise whereby both Yi Yong-ik and the Prime Minister were restored to all their former honours, and all went "merry as a marriage bell." But it was thought best to let Yi Yong-ik travel for his own and his country's good, so he was made Commissioner to buy Annam rice, which was itself a pretty piece of diplomacy, since it recalled prominently to the people the one phase of the injured man's career which they could unhesitatingly applaud. He was taken off in a Russian cruiser to Port Arthur — to buy Annam rice!

When he returned to Seoul a few weeks later, the Japanese lodged a strong protest against his return to political power, but the Russian authorities made a counter-proposition urging that he was the only man capable of handling the finances of the country. Under existing circumstances the very protest of the Japanese was an argument in his favour, and he came back into power on the flood tide, backed, as he had never been before, by the full favour of the Russian party. They naturally expected substantial payment for having saved him, and so far as he was able he liquidated the debt.

Meanwhile another man, Yi Keun-tak, had risen to power through servile adherence to Russian interests. The somewhat enigmatical character of Yi Yong-ik made him to a certain extent an unknown quantity. Not even the Japanese considered him wholly given over to Russia; but this new man was definitely committed to Russian interests, and with his rise to important position it became evident for the first time that the Korean government had decided to rely upon Russia and to reject the

aid or the advice of Japan. The end of the year 1902 may be said to have been the approximate time when Japan first realised that all hope of a peaceful solution of the Korean problem was gone. One naturally asks why Korea took this step, and, while we are still too near the event to secure an entirely dispassionate estimate or opinion, there seems to be little doubt that it was because Russia made no pretensions and expressed no desire to reform the administration of the government. She was perfectly content to let things go along in the old way in the peninsula, knowing that this would constantly and increasingly jeopardise the interests of Japan, while she herself had practically no commercial interests to suffer.

The immemorial policy of Russia in Asia sufficiently accounts for her work in Korea. Her policy of gradual absorption of native tribes has never held within its purview the civilising or the strengthening of those tribes, until they have been gathered under her ægis. On the other hand, until that has been accomplished she has either waited patiently for the disintegration of the native tribes or has actually aided in such disintegration. History shows no case in which Russia has strengthened the hands of another people for the sake of profiting by the larger market that would be opened up; for until very recently the commercial side of the question has scarcely been considered, and even now the commercial interests of Russia depend upon an exclusive market. So that in any case a dominant political influence is the very first step in every move of Russia in the East. Why then should Russia have advised administrative or monetary or any other reform, since such action would inevitably form a bar to the success of her own ultimate plans?

The historian of the future, taking his stand above and out of the smoke of battle, will take a dispassionate view of the whole situation. He will mark the antecedents of these two rival powers; he will compare their domestic and foreign policies, he will weigh the motives that impelled them, he will mark the instruments wielded by each and the men whom they employed

as their intermediaries and agents. Then, and not till then, will it be possible to tell whether the present recorders of events are right in asserting that while the policies of both powers are essentially selfish the success of Russia's policy involves the disintegration and national ruin of the peoples she comes in contact with, while the success of Japan's policy, if she only could see it, demands the rehabilitation of the Far East.

Much depended upon the attitude which Korea should finally assume toward these two mutually antagonistic policies. If she had sided with Japan and had shown a fixed determination to resist the encroachments of Russia by adopting a policy of internal renovation which would enlist the interest and command the admiration of the world, the war might have been indefinitely postponed. Whether it could have been finally avoided would depend largely upon the changes that are taking place in Russia herself, where in spite of all repressive agencies education and enlightenment are filtering in and causing a gradual change. Time alone will tell whether the outcome of the war was a blessing or not, for it is not yet certain whether Japan is bent upon territorial expansion or not. Her action in Korea is far from reassuring.

The year 1903 beheld the rapid culmination of the difficulties between Japan and Russia. It had already become almost sure that war alone would cut the Gordian knot, and if any more proof was necessary this year supplied it.

CHAPTER XII

THE JAPAN-RUSSIA WAR

EARLY in the year it transpired that the Russians had obtained from the Korean Emperor a concession to cut timber along the Yalu River. The thing was done secretly and irregularly, and the government never received a tithe of the value of the concession. By this act the government dispossessed itself of one of its finest sources of wealth, and sacrificed future millions for a few paltry thousand in hand, and a promise to pay a share of the profits, though no provision was made for giving the government an opportunity of watching the work in its own interests. Soon after the Russians had opened up the concession they began to make advances for the obtaining of harbour facilities in connection with it. The port of Yongampo was decided upon, and the Korean government was asked to allow the Russians the use of it for this purpose. This created a very profound impression upon Japan and upon the world at large. It was felt that this was giving Russia a foothold upon the soil of Korea, and Russia's history shows that, once gained, the point would never be given up. The activity of Russia in the north gave rise to the notion that Japanese influence was predominant in the southern half of the peninsula and Russia in the northern half. This gave birth to all sorts of rumours among the Korean people, and the ancient books were ransacked for prophecies that would fit the situation. As a whole, the attitude of the Korean has always been a rational and consistent one as between Russia and Japan. He has a greater personal antipathy for the latter because they have come into closer contact; but there is a mysterious dread in his heart which warns him of the Russian. He will never say which he

would rather have in power here, but always says, "I pray to be delivered from them both."

Japan began to urge upon the government the necessity of opening Yongampo to foreign trade, but Russia, of course, opposed this with all her powers of persuasion. Great Britain and the United States joined in urging the opening of the port. The United States had already arranged for the opening of the port of Antung, just opposite Yongampo, and for the sake of trade it was highly desirable that a port on the Korean side of the Yalu should be opened. It had no special reference to the Russian occupation of the port, but as pressure was being brought to bear upon the government to throw open the port, it was considered an opportune time to join forces in pushing for this desired end. And it was more for the interest of Korea to do this than for any of the powers that were urging it. Such an act would have been a check to Russian aggression, and would have rendered nugatory any ulterior plan she might have as regards Korea. But the Russian power in Seoul was too great. It had not upheld the cause of Yi Yong-ik in vain, and the government, while using very specious language, withstood every attempt to secure the opening of the port. At last the American government modified its request, and asked that Wiju be opened; but to this Russia objected almost as strongly as to the other. There can be little doubt that this uncompromising attitude of Russia on the Korean border confirmed Japan in the position she had already assumed. It was quite evident that the force of arms was the only thing that would make Russia retire from Korean soil.

All through the summer complaints came in from the north that the Russians were working their own will along the northern border, and taking every advantage of the loose language in which the agreement had been worded. Again and again information came up to Seoul that the Russian agents were going outside the limits specified in the bond, but there was no one to check it. It was impossible to police the territory encroached

upon, and there is reason to believe that the government chafed under the imposition. At least the telegraph lines which the Russians erected, entirely without warrant, were repeatedly torn down by emissaries of the government, and apparently without check from the central authorities.

In the summer, when the text of the proposed agreement between Russia and Korea anent Yongampo became public, the Japanese government made a strong protest. She probably knew that this was a mere form, but she owed it to herself to file a protest against such suicidal action on the part of Korea. The insolence of the Russians swelled to the point of renaming Yongampo Port Nicholas.

In October the Japanese merchants in Seoul and other commercial centres began calling in all outstanding moneys, with the evident expectation of war. All brokers and loan associations closed their accounts and refused to make further loans. It is more than probable that they had received the hint that it might be well to suspend operations for the time being. From this time until war was declared, the people of Korea waited in utmost suspense. They knew war only as a universal desolation. They had no notion of any of the comparative amenities of modern warfare or the immunities of non-combatants. War meant to them the breaking up of the very foundations of society, and many a time the anxious inquiry was put as to whether the war would probably be fought on Korean soil or in Manchuria. Once more Korea found herself the "shrimp between two whales," and doubly afflicted in that whichever one should win she would in all probability form part of the booty of the victor.

The year 1904, which will be recorded in history as one of the most momentous in all the annals of the Far East, opened upon a very unsatisfactory state of things in Korea. It had become as certain as any future event can be that Japan and Russia would soon be at swords' points. The negotiations between these two powers were being carried on in St. Petersburg, and, as published later, were of the most unsatisfactory

nature. Japan was completing her arrangements for striking the blow which fell on the 9th of February. Of course these plans were not made public, but there was conflict in the very air, and all men were bracing themselves for the shock that they felt must soon come. The action of Japanese money-lenders in suspending operations was followed in January by the Korean pawnbrokers, and at a season when such action inflicted the greatest possible harm upon the poor people of the capital, who find it impossible to live without temporarily hypothecating a portion of their personal effects. This, together with the excessive cold, aroused a spirit of unrest which came near assuming dangerous proportions. Some of the native papers were so unwise as to fan the embers by dilating upon the hard conditions under which the Koreans laboured. Their sharpest comments were directed at the government, but their tendency was to incite the populace against foreigners.

All through the month the various foreign legations were bringing in guards to protect their legations and their respective nationals, and this very natural and entirely justifiable action was resented by the government. It protested time and again against the presence of foreign troops, as if their coming were in some way an insult to Korea. The officials in charge thereby showed their utter incompetence to diagnose the situation correctly. It was well known that the disaffection among the Korean troops in Seoul was great, and that the dangerous element known as the Peddlers' Guild was capable of any excesses. The unfriendly attitude of Yi Yong-ik and Yi Keun-tak towards western foreigners, excepting Russians and French, together with their more or less close connection with the Peddlers, was sufficient reason for the precautionary measures that were adopted. But the native papers made matters worse by ridiculing both the government and the army. At one time there was considerable solicitude on the part of foreigners, not lest the Korean populace itself would break into open revolt, but lest some violent faction would be encouraged by the authorities to make trouble, so little

confidence had they in the good sense of the court favourite. It was fairly evident that in case of trouble the Japanese would very soon hold the capital, and it was feared that the violently pro-Russian officials, despairing of protection at the hands of Russia, would cause a general insurrection, hoping in the tumult to make good their escape. It was felt that great precautions should be taken by foreigners not to give any excuse for a popular uprising. The electric cars diminished their speed so as to obviate the possibility of any accident, for even the smallest casualty might form the match which would set the people on fire.

About the 20th of January the report circulated that Russia had proposed that northern Korea be made a neutral zone and that Japan exercise predominant influence in the south. This was only an echo of the negotiations which were nearing the breaking point in St. Petersburg, and it confirmed those who knew Japan in their opinion that war alone could settle the matter. On the following day the Korean government issued its proclamation of neutrality as between Russia and Japan. This curious action, taken before any declaration of war or any act of hostility, was a pretty demonstration of Russian tactics. It was evident that in case of war Japan would be the first in the field, and Korea would naturally be the road by which she would attack Russia. Therefore, while the two were technically at peace with each other, Korea was evidently induced by Russia to put forth a premature declaration of neutrality in order to anticipate any use of Korean territory by Japanese troops. At the time this was done the Foreign Office was shorn of all real power, and was only the mouthpiece through which these friends of Russia spoke in order to make their pronouncements official. It was already known that two of the most powerful Koreans at court had strongly urged that Russia be asked to send troops to guard the imperial palace in Seoul, and the Japanese were keenly on the lookout for evidences of bad faith in the matter of this declared neutrality. When, therefore, they picked up a boat on the Yellow Sea a few days later and found on it a Korean bearing

a letter to Port Arthur asking for troops, and that, while unofficial in form, it came from the very officials who had promulgated the declaration of neutrality, it became abundantly clear that the spirit of neutrality was non-existent. It must be left to the future historian to declare whether the Japanese were justified in impairing a declared neutrality that existed only in name, and under cover of which the Korean officials were proved to be acting in a manner distinctly hostile to the interests of Japan.

All through January the Japanese were busy making military stations every fifteen miles between Fusan and Seoul. All along the line small buildings were erected, sufficiently large to house twenty or thirty men. On the 22nd of January General Ijichi arrived in Seoul as Military Attaché of the Japanese Legation. The appointment of a man of such rank as this was most significant and should have aroused the Russians to a realising sense of their danger; but it did not do so. Four days later this general made a final appeal to the Korean government, asking for some definite statement as to its attitude toward Russia and Japan. The foreign office answered that the government was entirely neutral. Two days later the Japanese landed a large amount of barley at the port of Kunsan, a few hours' run south of Chemulpo, and a light railway of the Decauville type was also landed at the same place. On the 29th all Korean students were recalled from Japan.

On the 1st of February the Russians appeared to be the only ones who did not realise that trouble was brewing, otherwise why should they have stored fifteen hundred tons of coal and a quantity of barley in their godowns on Roze Island in Chemulpo harbour on the 2nd of that month? On the 7th the government received a despatch from Wiju saying that several thousand Russian troops were approaching the border, and that the Japanese merchants and others were preparing to retire from that place. The same day the foreign office sent to all the open ports ordering that news should be immediately telegraphed of any important movements.

THE JAPANESE LEGATION

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On the 8th of February the Japanese posted notices in Seoul and vicinity that what Japan was about to do was dictated by motives of right and justice, and that the property and personal rights of Koreans would be respected. Koreans were urged to report any cases of ill-treatment to the Japanese authorities and immediate justice was promised. From this day the port of Chemulpo was practically blockaded by the Japanese, and only by their consent could vessels enter or clear.

Having arrived at the point of actual rupture between Japan and Russia, it is necessary, before entering into any details of the struggle, to indicate the precise bearing of it upon Korea. Japan has always looked upon Korea as a land whose political status and affinities are of vital interest to herself, just as England once looked upon the Cinque ports, namely, as a possible base of hostile action, and therefore to be carefully watched. One of two things have therefore been deemed essential, either that Korea should be thoroughly independent or that she should be under a Japanese protectorate. These two ideas have animated different parties in Japan and have led to occasional troubles. There is one radical faction which has consistently and persistently demanded that Japan's suzerainty over Korea should be established and maintained, and it was the unwillingness of the Japanese authorities to adopt strong measures in the peninsula which led to the Satsuma Rebellion. Another large fraction of the Japanese, of more moderate and rational view, are committed to the policy of simply holding to the independence of Korea, arguing very rightly that if such independence is maintained and the resources of the country are gradually developed, Japan will reap all the material advantages of the situation without shouldering the burden of the Korean administration or meeting the violent opposition of the Koreans, which seizure would inevitably entail. It is this latter policy which has prevailed, and according to which Japan has attempted to work during the past three decades. It is this which actuated her during the period of China's active claim to suzerainty and at last caused the War of

1894, which supposedly settled the question of Korea's independence. But following upon this came the encroachments of Russia in Manchuria and the adoption of a vigorous policy in Korea. Japan's efforts to preserve the intrinsic autonomy of Korea were rendered abortive partly through mistakes which her own representatives and agents made, but still more through the supineness and venality of Korean officials. The subjects of the Czar at the capital of Korea made use of the most corrupt officials at court, and through them opposed Japanese interests at every point. Furthermore, they made demands for exclusive rights in different Korean ports, and succeeded in encroaching upon Korean sovereignty in Yongampo. The evident policy of Russia was to supplant Japan in the peninsula, and no reasonable person can fail to see that it was their ultimate plan to add Korea to the map of Russia. The cause of the war was, therefore, the necessity laid upon Japan of safeguarding her vital interests, nay, her very existence, by checking the encroachments of Russia upon Korean territory.

But before submitting the matter to the arbitrament of the sword, Japan exerted every effort to make Russia define her intentions in the Far East. With a patience that elicited the admiration of the world she kept plying Russia with pertinent questions, until at last it was revealed that Russia intended to deal with Manchuria as she wished, and would concede Japanese interests in southern Korea only, and not even this unless Japan would engage not to act in that sphere as Russia was acting in Manchuria.

All this time the Japanese people were clamouring for war. They wanted to get at the throat of their manifest foe; but their government in a masterly way held them in check and kept its own secrets so inviolable as to astonish the most astute diplomatists of the day. At last, when the hour struck, Japan declared for war without having weakened the enthusiasm of her people, and without giving occasion to adverse critics to say that she had yielded to popular importunity. When she communicated to

Russia her irreducible minimum, one would think that even the blind could see that war was certain to follow soon. But even then, if there is any truth in direct evidence, the great majority of the Russians laughed the matter aside as impossible. The moderation and self-control of Japan was counted to her for hesitation, so that when the moment for action came, and Japan sprang upon her like a tigress robbed of her whelps, Russia cried aloud that she had been wronged. Already on the morning of the 7th Baron Rosen's credentials had been handed back to him in Tokyo. The evening before this the Japanese Minister had left St. Petersburg. This in itself was a declaration of war, but forty hours elapsed before Japan struck the first blow. During those hours Russia had ample time in which to withdraw her boats from Chemulpo, even though the Japanese refused to transmit telegrams to Seoul. A fast boat from Port Arthur could easily have brought the message.

It was on the 6th and 7th that reports circulated in Seoul that the Japanese were landing large bodies of troops at Kunsan or Asan or both. These rumours turned out to be false, but beneath them was the fact that a fleet was approaching Chemulpo. The question has been insistently asked why the Russian Minister did not inform the commanders of these Russian vessels, and see to it that they were clear of the harbour before these rumours were realised. The answer as given is that the Russian Minister had no control over these boats. They had their orders to remain in Chemulpo and they must stay. One would think that there would be at least enough *rapport* between the civil and military (or naval) authorities to use the one in forwarding the interests of the other.

Even yet the Russians did not appreciate the seriousness of the situation; but they decided that it was time to send notice to their authorities in Port Arthur of what was rumoured at Chemulpo. So the small gunboat *Koryetz* made ready to move out. Her captain, Belaieff, proposed to the Russian Consul that the Russian steamship *Sungari,* which was in port, should go

with the *Koryetz* and thus enjoy her protection, but the agent of the company which owned the steamship strongly objected to her leaving the neutral port at such a time. He evidently realised in part the acuteness of the situation. So the *Sungari* remained at her anchorage and the *Koryetz* steamed out of port at two o'clock in the afternoon. Now, the harbour of Chemulpo is a somewhat peculiar one, for in one sense it is landlocked and in another it is not. It is formed by islands between which there are many openings to the open sea, but most of these are so shallow that ships of medium draught do not dare attempt them. There is but one recognised entrance, and that is from the south-west, or between that and the south. This entrance is several miles wide, and in the centre of it lies Round Island. When the *Koryetz* arrived at the exit of the harbour, she suddenly found herself surrounded by torpedo-boats. The only witnesses of what occurred at this point are the Japanese and the Russians, and we can only give their accounts. The Russians say that the Japanese launched four torpedoes at the *Koryetz,* and when within ten feet of her side they sank. Another statement is that a shot was fired on board the *Koryetz,* but it was a mere accident. The Japanese claim that the *Koryetz* fired first. If we try to weigh the probabilities it seems impossible that the torpedoes of the Japanese should have missed the *Koryetz* if the torpedo-boats were as near as the Russians claim. On the other hand, the admission on the part of a single Russian that the first gun was fired on the *Koryetz,* even though by accident, is rather damaging, for it is more than singular that an accident should have happened at that precise time. It is a tax on the credulity of the public to give this lame excuse.

In any case it makes little difference who began the firing. The Japanese had already seized the Russian steamer *Mukden* in the harbour of Fusan, and the war had begun. The Japanese doubtless held with Polonius, that if it is necessary to fight, the man who strikes first and hardest will have the advantage. The *Koryetz* turned back to her anchorage and the Russians became

aware of the extreme precariousness of their position. Whatever attitude one may take toward the general situation, it is impossible not to extend a large degree of sympathy to these Russians personally. Through no fault of their own they were trapped in the harbour, and found too late that they must engage in a hopeless fight in order to uphold the honour of the Russian flag. But even yet it was not sure that the neutrality of the port would be ignored by the Japanese. Lying at anchor among neutral vessels in a neutral harbour, there was more or less reason to believe that they were safe for the time being.

About four o'clock in the afternoon of the 8th of February, which fell on Monday, three Japanese transports entered Chemulpo harbour from the south, convoyed by cruisers and torpedo-boats. They seemingly took no notice of the two Russian boats lying at anchor, and were evidently sure that the Russians would not fire upon the transports. It would be interesting to know whether the Japanese were relying upon the declared neutrality of the port in thus venturing, or whether they felt sure that their own superior strength would keep the Russians still, or whether, again, they were certain that the Russians had orders not to fire the first gun. But it is bootless to ask questions that can never be answered. Here is where the assailant has the advantage. He can choose the time and method of his attack. We may surmise that, had the Russians divined the intentions of the Japanese and had foreseen the outcome, they would have acted differently, but divination of Japanese intentions does not seem to be Russia's strong point.

As soon as the Japanese came to anchor, preparations were made for the immediate landing of the troops, and the cruisers and torpedo-boats that had convoyed them in left the port and joined the fleet outside. This fleet consisted of six cruisers and several torpedo-boats. The *Asama* and the *Chiyoda* were the most powerful of the cruisers, the former being nearly half as large again as the *Variak*.

Night came on, and throughout its long hours the Japanese

troops, by the light of huge fires burning on the jetty, were landed and marched up into the town. When morning came, everyone was in a state of expectancy. If there was a Japanese fleet outside, they doubtless had other work on hand than simply watching two Russian boats. Nor could they leave them behind, for one of them was Russia's fastest cruiser, and might steam out of the harbour at any time and destroy Japanese transports. Knowing, as we do now, that an immediate attack on Port Arthur had been decided upon, we see that it was impossible to leave these Russian boats in the rear. Japan had never recognised the neutrality of Korea, for she knew that the declaration was merely a Russian move to embarrass her, and she never hesitated a moment to break the thin shell of pretence.

About ten o'clock a sealed letter was handed to Captain Rudnieff of the *Variak*. It was from the Japanese Admiral, and had been sent through the Russian Consulate. It was delivered on board the *Variak* by the hand of Mr. N. Krell, a Russian resident of the port. This letter informed the Russian commander that unless both Russian boats should leave the anchorage and steam out of the bay before twelve o'clock the Japanese would come in at four o'clock and attack them where they lay. Captain Rudnieff immediately communicated the startling intelligence to Captain Belaieff of the *Koryetz* and to the commanders of the British, American, French and Italian war-vessels. We are informed that a conference of the various commanders took place, and that the Russians were advised to lie where they were. The British commander was deputed to confer with the Japanese. This was done by signal, and it is said that a protest was made against the proposed violation of neutrality of the port and that the neutral boats refused to shift their anchorage. But all complications of this nature were avoided by the determination of the Russians to accept the challenge. This they deemed to be due their flag. It is not improbable that they now foresaw that the neutrality of the port

would not avail them against the enemy. By remaining at anchor they could only succeed in involving France, Italy, Great Britain and the United States, and there would be sure to be those who would charge the Russians with cowardice. If this was to begin the war, it must at least prove the dauntless courage of the servants of the Czar. So the commander of the *Variak* ordered the decks cleared for action. It has been stated that he would have preferred to have the *Koryetz* stay at her anchorage, for by a quick dash it was just possible that the swift *Variak* alone might be able to evade the Japanese and run the gauntlet successfully. But the commander of the *Koryetz* refused to listen to any such proposition. If the only honour to be gotten out of the affair was by a desperate attack, he was not going to forego his share of it. He would go out and sink with the *Variak*. So the *Koryetz* also cleared for action. It was done in such haste that all movables that were unnecessary were thrown overboard, a topmast that would not come down in the usual manner was hewn down with an axe, and by half-past eleven the two vessels were ready to go out to their doom. It was an almost hopeless task — an entirely hopeless one unless the Japanese should change their minds or should make some grave mistake, and neither of these things was at all probable. The Russians were going to certain destruction. Some call it rashness, not bravery, but they say not well. The boats were doomed in any case, and it was the duty of their officers and crews to go forth and in dying inflict what injury they could upon the enemy. To go into battle with chances equal is the act of a brave man, but to walk into the jaws of death with nothing but defeat in prospect, is the act of a hero, and the Japanese would be the last to detract from the noble record that the Russians made. Time has not yet lent its glamour to this event, we are too near it to see it in proper proportions, but if the six hundred heroes of Balaclava, veterans of many a fight, gained undying honour for the desperate charge they made, how shall not the future crown these men who,

having never been in action before, made such a gallant dash at the foe? And herein lies the intrinsic damnableness of war, that causes which will not stand the test of abstract justice can marshal to their support the noblest qualities of which men are capable.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BATTLE OF CHEMULPO

IT was a cloudless but hazy day, and from the anchorage the Japanese fleet was all but invisible, for it lay at least eight miles out in the entrance of the harbour and partly concealed by Round Island, which splits the offing into two channels. The two boats made straight for the more easterly of the channels, their course being a very little west of south. When they had proceeded about half the distance from the anchorage to the enemy's fleet, the latter threw a shot across the bows of each of the Russian boats, as a command to stop and surrender, but the Russians took no notice of it. The only chance the Russians had to inflict any damage was to reduce the firing range as much as possible, for the *Variak's* guns were only six inches and four-tenths in calibre, and at long range they would have been useless. This was at five minutes before noon. The Japanese fleet was not deployed in a line facing the approaching boats, and it was apparent that they did not intend to bring their whole force to bear upon the Russians simultaneously. We are informed that only two of the Japanese vessels, the *Asama* and the *Chiyoda,* did the work. It was not long after the warning shots had been fired that the Japanese let loose, and the roar that went up from those terrible machines of destruction tore the quiet of the windless bay to tatters and made the houses of the town tremble where they stood. As the *Variak* advanced, she swerved to the eastward and gave the Japanese her starboard broadside. All about her the sea was lashed into foam by striking shot, and almost from the beginning of the fight her steering-gear was shot away, so that she had to depend on her engines alone for steering. It became

evident to her commander that the passage was impossible. He had pushed eastward until there was imminent danger of running aground. So he turned again toward the west, and came around in a curve which brought the *Variak* much nearer to the Japanese. It was at this time that the deadly work was done upon her. Ten of her twelve gun-captains were shot away. A shell struck her fo'castle, passed between the arm and body of a gunner who had his hand upon his hip and, bursting, killed every other man on the fo'castle. Both bridges were destroyed by bursting shells, and the captain was seriously wounded in the left arm. The watchers on shore and on the shipping in the harbour saw flames bursting out from her quarter-deck, and one witness plainly saw shells drop just beside her and burst beneath the water-line. It was these shots that did the real damage, for when, after three-quarters of an hour of steady fighting, she turned her prow back toward the anchorage it was seen that she had a heavy list to port, which could have been caused only by serious damage below the water-line. As the two boats came slowly back to port, the *Variak* so crippled by the destruction of one of her engines that she could make only ten knots an hour, the Japanese boats followed, pouring in a galling fire, until the Russians had almost reached the anchorage. Then the pursuers drew back and the battle was over. The *Korytz* was intact. The Japanese had reserved all their fire for the larger vessel. The *Variak* was useless as a fighting machine, for her heavy list to port would probably have made it impossible to train the guns on the enemy, but all knew that the end had not yet come. The Russians had neither sunk nor surrendered. The threat of the Japanese to come in at four o'clock was still active. As soon as the *Variak* dropped anchor the British sent off four hospital boats to her with a surgeon and a nurse. Other vessels also sent offers of aid. But it was found that the Russians had decided to lie at anchor and fight to the bitter end, and at the last moment blow up their vessels with all on board. What else was there for them to do? They

would not surrender, and they could not leave their ships and go ashore only to be captured by the enemy. They would play out the tragedy to a finish, and go down fighting. Upon learning of this determination, the commanders of the various neutral vessels held another conference, at which it was decided that the Russians had done all that was necessary to vindicate the honour of their flag, and that, as it was a neutral port, the survivors should be invited to seek asylum on the neutral vessels. The invitation was accepted, and the sixty-four wounded on board the *Variak* were at once transferred to the British cruiser *Talbot* and the French cruiser *Pascal*. As the commanders of the neutral vessels knew that the *Variak* and *Koryetz* were to be sunk by the Russians, they paid no particular attention to the reiterated statement of the Japanese, that they would enter the harbour at four and finish the work already begun. The passengers, crew and mails on board the steamship *Sungari* had already been transferred to the *Pascal,* and an attempt had been made to scuttle her, but she was filling very slowly indeed. It was about half-past three in the afternoon that the officers and crew of the *Koryetz* went over the side and on board the *Pascal.* A train had been laid by which she would be blown up, and it is supposed that she was entirely abandoned, but some spectators assert that they saw several men on the forward deck an instant before the explosion took place.

It was generally known throughout the town that the *Koryetz* would be blown up before four o'clock, and everyone sought some point of vantage from which to witness the spectacle. Scores of people went out to the little island on which the lighthouse stands, for this was nearest to the doomed ship. It was thirty-seven minutes past three when the waiting multitude saw two blinding flashes of light, one following the other in quick succession. A terrific report followed, which dwarfed the roar of cannon to a whisper and shook every house in the town as if it had been struck by a solid rock. The window-fastenings of one house at least were torn off, so great was the concussion.

An enormous cloud of smoke and debris shot toward the sky and at the same time enveloped the spot where the vessel had lain. A moment later there began a veritable shower of splintered wood, torn and twisted railing, books, clothes, rope, utensils and a hundred other belongings of the ship. The cloud of smoke expanded in the upper air and blotted out the sun like an eclipse. The startled gulls flew hither and thither, as if dazed by this unheard-of phenomenon, and men instinctively raised their hands to protect themselves from the falling debris, pieces of which were drifted by the upper currents of air for a distance of three miles landward, where they fell by the hundreds in people's yards.

When the smoke was dissipated, it was discovered that the *Koryetz* had sunk, only her funnel and some torn rigging appearing above the surface, if we except her forward steel deck, which the force of the explosion had bent up from the prow so that the point of it, like the share of a huge plough, stood several feet out of water. The surface of the bay all about the spot was covered thickly with smoking debris, and several of the ship's boats were floating about intact upon the water.

The *Variak* was left to sink where she lay. The forty-one dead on board were placed together in a cabin and went down with her. She burned on till evening and then, inclining more and more to port, her funnels finally touched the water, and with a surging, choking groan, as of some great animal in pain, she sank. As the water reached the fires a cloud of steam went up which, illuminated by the last flash of the fire, formed her signal of farewell.

It was arranged that the British and the French boats should carry the Russians to a neutral port and guarantee their parole until the end of the war.

This wholly unexpected annihilation of the Russian boats naturally caused consternation among the Russians of Chemulpo and Seoul. The Russian Consulate was surrounded by the Jap-

anese troops, and the Consul was held practically a prisoner. The Japanese Minister in Seoul suggested to the Russian Minister, through the French Legation, the advisability of his removing from Seoul with his nationals, and every facility was given him for doing this with expedition and with comfort. A few days later all the Russians were taken by special train to Chemulpo, and there, being joined by the Russian subjects in Chemulpo, they went on board the *Pascal.* This vessel must have been crowded, for it is said that when she sailed she had on board six hundred Russians, both civilians and military men.

Twenty-four of the most desperately wounded men on board the neutral ships were sent ashore and placed in the Provisional Red Cross Hospital. For this purpose the English Church Mission kindly put at the disposal of the Japanese their hospital at Chemulpo. Several of these wounded men were suffering from gangrene when they came off the *Pascal,* but with the most sedulous care the Japanese physicians and nurses pulled them through.

After this battle at Chemulpo there was no more question about landing Korean troops further down the coast; in fact, as soon as the ice was out of the Tadong River, Chinnampo became the point of disembarkation. But meanwhile the troops which had landed at Chemulpo were pushing north by land as rapidly as circumstances would permit, and within a few weeks of the beginning of the war Pyeng-yang was held by a strong force of Japanese. At the same time work was pushed rapidly on the Seoul-Fusan Railway and also begun on the projected railway line between Seoul and Wiju.

As for the Russians, they never seriously invaded Korean territory. Bands of Cossacks crossed the Yalu and scoured the country right and left, but their only serious purpose was to keep in touch with the enemy and report as to their movements. On the 28th of February a small band of Cossacks approached the north gate of Pyeng-yang, and, after exchanging a few shots

with the Japanese guard, withdrew. This was the first point at which the two belligerents came in touch with each other.

It was on the night of the 23rd of February that Korea signed with Japan a protocol, by the terms of which Korea practically allied herself with Japan and became, as it were, a silent partner in the war. Korea granted the Japanese the right to use Korea as a road to Manchuria, and engaged to give them every possible facility for prosecuting the war. On the other hand, Japan guaranteed the independence of Korea and the safety of the imperial family. It is needless to discuss the degree of spontaneity with which Korea did this. It was a case of necessity, but if rightly used it might have proved of immense benefit to Korea, as it surely did to Japan. It formally did away with the empty husk of neutrality which had been proclaimed, and made every seaport of the peninsula belligerent territory, even as it did the land itself.

March saw the end of the Peddlers' Guild. They had been organised in Russian interests, but now they had no longer any *raison d'être.* As a final flurry, one of their number entered the house of the Foreign Minister with the intent to murder him, but did not find his victim. Other similar attempts were made, but did not succeed.

The Japanese handled the situation in Seoul with great circumspection. The notion that they would attack the pro-Russian officials proved false. Everything was kept quiet, and the perturbation into which the court and the government were thrown by these startling events was soon soothed.

Marquis Ito was sent from Japan with a friendly message to the Emperor of Korea, and this did much to quiet the unsettled state of things in Korea. At about the same time the northern ports of Wiju and Yongampo were opened to foreign trade. This was a natural result of the withdrawal of Russian influence. It was not long before Yi Yong-ik, who had played such a leading rôle in Korea, was invited to go to Japan, and thus an element of unrest was removed from the field of action.

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THE FRENCH LEGATION BUILDING

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It was believed that the Japanese would immediately introduce many needed reforms, but it seemed to be their policy to go very slowly, so slowly in fact that the better element among the Koreans was disappointed, and got the impression that Japan was not particularly interested in the matter of reform. It is probable that the energies of the Japanese were too much engaged in other directions to divert any to Korea at the time. They had been complaining bitterly about the monetary conditions, but when they suddenly stepped into power in Seoul on the 9th of February they seemed to forget all about this, for up to the end of 1904 they failed to do anything to correct the vagaries of Korean finance. But instead of this the Japanese merchants in Korea and other Japanese who were here for other reasons than their health immediately began to make requests and demands for all sorts of privileges. The Board of Trade in Fusan asked the Japanese government to secure control of the Maritime Customs service, permission for extra-territorial privileges, the establishment of Japanese agricultural stations and other impossible things.

Meanwhile the Japanese were steadily pushing north. At Anju a slight skirmish occurred, but there was nothing that could be called a fight until the Japanese reached the town of Chöng-ju, where a small body of Russians took a stand on a hill northwest of the town and held it for three hours, but even here the casualties were only about fifteen on either side. The Russians evidently had no notion of making a determined stand this side the Yalu. Already, a week before, the Russian troops had withdrawn from Yongampo and had crossed to Antung. This fight at Chöng-ju occurred on the 28th of March, and a week later practically all the Russian forces had crossed the Yalu, and Korea ceased to be belligerent territory. It is not the province of this history to follow the Japanese across that historic river and relate the events which occurred at the beginning of May when the first great land battle of the war was fought.

The whole north had been thrown into the greatest con-

fusion by the presence of these two belligerents. Cossack bands had scurried about the country, making demands for food and fodder, a part of which they were willing to pay for with Russian currency quite unknown to the Korean. From scores of villages and towns the women had fled to the mountain recesses at a most inclement season, and untold suffering had been entailed. But these are things that always come in the track of war, and the Koreans bore them as uncomplainingly as they could. Throughout the whole country the absorption of the attention of the government in the events of the war was taken advantage of by robbers, and their raids were frequent and destructive. As soon as the government found that the Japanese did not intend to rule with a high hand, it sank back into the former state of self-complacent lethargy, and things went along in the old ruts. It was perfectly plain that Korean officialdom had no enthusiasm for the Japanese cause. It is probable that a large majority of the people preferred to see Japan win rather than the Russians, but it was the fond wish of ninety-nine out of every hundred to see Korea rid of them both. Whichever one held exclusive power here was certain to become an object of hatred to the Korean people. Had the Russians driven out the Japanese, the Koreans would have hated them as heartily. Whichever horn of the dilemma Korea became impaled upon, she was sure to think the other would have been less sharp. Few Koreans looked at the matter from any large standpoint or tried to get from the situation anything but personal advantage. This is doubtless the reason why it was so difficult to gain an opinion from Korean officials. They did not want to go on record as having any decided sympathies either way. The people of no other land were so nearly neutral as were those of Korea.

The temporary effect of the war upon the Korean currency was to enhance its value. Imports suddenly came to a standstill because of the lack of steamships and the possible dangers of navigation. This stopped the demand for yen. The Japanese

army had to spend large sums in Korea, and this required the purchase of Korean money. The result was that the yen, instead of holding its ratio of something like one to two and a half of the Korean dollar, fell to the ratio of one to only one and four-tenths. When, however, the sea was cleared of the Russians and import trade was resumed and the bulk of the Japanese crossed the Yalu, the Korean dollar fell again to a ratio of about two to one, which it has preserved up to the present time.

From the time when the Russians retired beyond the Yalu, warlike operations between the two belligerents were confined to northeast Korea, though even there very little was doing. The Vladivostock squadron was still in being, and on the 25th of April it appeared at the mouth of Wonsan harbour. Only one small Japanese boat was at anchor there, the *Goyo Maru,* and this was destroyed by a torpedo-boat which came in for the express purpose. Of course this created intense excitement in the town, and there was a hurried exodus of women and children, but the Russians had no intention of bombarding the place, and soon took their departure. Only a few hours before the *Kinshiu,* a Japanese transport with upwards of one hundred and fifty troops on board, had sailed for Sung-ju to the north of Wonsan, but meeting bad weather in the night the torpedo-boats that accompanied her were obliged to run for shelter, and the *Kinshiu* turned back for Wonsan. By so doing she soon ran into the arms of the Russian fleet, and, refusing to surrender, was sunk, but forty-five of the troops on board effected their escape to the mainland.

CHAPTER XIV

THE JAPANESE IN KOREA

WE must now go back and inquire into important civil matters. We have seen that no strong attempt was made by the Japanese to secure reforms in the administration of the Korean government, and for this reason many of the best Koreans were dissatisfied with the way things were going. Therefore it was doubly unfortunate that on the 17th of June the Japanese authorities should make the startling suggestion that all uncultivated land in the peninsula, as well as other national resources, should be thrown open to the Japanese. This appears to have been a scheme evolved by one Nagamori, and broached by him so speciously to the powers in Tokyo that they backed him in it; but there can be no question that it was a grave mistake. There is no other point on which the Korean is so sensitive as upon that of his land. He is a son of the soil, and agriculture is the basis of all his institutions. The mere proposal raised an instant storm of protest from one end of Korea to the other. The Koreans saw in this move the entering wedge which would rive the country. It was the beginning of the end. This excessive show of feeling was not expected by the Japanese, and it is probable that their intentions were by no means so black as the Koreans pictured them. The very general terms in which the proposal was worded, and the almost entire lack of limiting particulars, gave occasion for all sorts of wild conjectures and, it must be confessed, left the door open to very wide constructions. The time was unpropitious, the method was unfortunate, and the subject-matter of the proposal itself was questionable. The all-important matter of water supply and control, the diffi-

culties of jurisdiction on account of the extra-territorial rights implied in the proposal, and other allied questions immediately presented themselves to the minds of Koreans, and they recognised the fact that the carrying out of this plan would necessarily result in a Japanese protectorate, if not absolute absorption into the Empire of Japan. The Japanese do not seem to have followed the logic of the matter to this point, or else had not believed the Koreans capable of doing so. But when the storm of protest broke it carried everything before it. The Japanese were not prepared to carry the thing to extremes, and, after repeated attempts at a compromise, the matter was dropped, though the Japanese neither withdrew their request nor accepted the refusal of the Korean government. It is a matter of great regret that the Japanese did not quietly and steadily press the question of internal reforms, and by so doing hasten the time when the Korean people as a whole would repose such confidence in the good intentions of the neighbour country that even such plans as this of the waste lands could be carried through without serious opposition; for it is quite sure that there is a large area of fallow land in Korea which might well be put under the plough.

During the weeks when the Japanese were pressing for a favourable answer to the waste-land proposition the Koreans adopted a characteristic method of opposition. A society calling itself the *Po-an* was formed. The name means "Society for the Promotion of Peace and Safety." It had among its membership some of the leading Korean officials. It held meetings at the cotton guild in the centre of Seoul, and a good deal of excited discussion took place as to ways and means for defeating the purpose of the Japanese. At the same time memorials by the same poured in upon the Emperor, beseeching him not to give way to the demands. The Japanese determined that these forms of opposition must be put down; so on the 16th of July the meeting of the society was broken in upon by the Japanese police, and some of the leading members were forcibly carried

away to the Japanese police station. Other raids were made upon the society, and more of its members were arrested and its papers confiscated. The Japanese warned the government that these attempts to stir up a riot must be put down with a stern hand, and demanded that those who persisted in sending in memorials against the Japanese be arrested and punished. If the Korean government would not do it, the Japanese threatened to take the law into their own hands. The Japanese troops in Seoul were augmented until the number was fully six thousand.

The agitation was not confined to Seoul, for leading Koreans sent out circular letters to all the country districts urging the people to come up to Seoul and make a monster demonstration which should convince the Japanese that they were in dead earnest. Many of these letters were suppressed by the prefects, but in spite of this the news spread far and wide, and the society enrolled thousands of members in every province.

The effect of this was seen when, early in August, the Japanese military authorities asked for the services of six thousand Korean coolies in the north at handsome wages. The number was apportioned among different provinces, but the results were meagre. Disaffected persons spread the report that these coolies would be put on the fighting line, and it was with the greatest difficulty that two thousand were secured. There were sanguinary fights in many towns where attempts were made to force coolies to go against their will. It was perfectly right for the Japanese to wish to secure such labour, but the tide of public sentiment was flowing strong in the other direction, because of the attempt to secure the waste land and because of the suspension of the right of free speech.

The cessation of Japanese efforts to push the waste-land measure did not put an end to agitation throughout the country, and the Po-an Society continued to carry on its propaganda, until on the 22nd of August a new society took the field, named the Il-chin Society. This was protected by the Japanese police, who allowed only properly accredited members to enter its doors.

This looked as if it were intended as a counter-move to the Po-an Society, and, as the latter was having very little success, a third society took up the gauntlet under the name of the *Kuk-min*, or "National People's" Society. The platforms promulgated by all these societies were quite faultless, but the institutions had no power whatever to carry out their laudable plans, and so received only the smiles of the public.

During the summer the Japanese suggested that it would be well for Korea to recall her foreign representatives. The idea was to have Korean diplomatic business abroad transacted through Japanese legations. Whether this was a serious attempt or only a feeler put out to get the sense of the Korean government we are unable to say, but up to the end of the year the matter was not pushed.

The various societies which had been formed as protests against existing conditions stated some things that ought to be accomplished, but suggested no means by which they could be done. The difficulty which besets the country is the lack of general education, and no genuine improvement can be looked for until the people are educated up to it. For this reason a number of foreigners joined themselves into the Educational Association of Korea, their aim being to provide suitable textbooks for Korean schools and to help in other ways toward the solution of the great question. About the same time the Minister of Education presented the government with a recommendation that the graduates of the government schools be given the preference in the distribution of public offices. This had no apparent effect upon the government at the time, but this is what must come before students will flock to the government schools with any enthusiasm. Later in the year a large number of Koreans also founded an educational society. It made no pretensions to political significance, but went quietly to work, gathering together those who are convinced that the education of the masses is the one thing needed to put Korea firmly upon her feet.

In the middle of October the Japanese military authorities sent Marshal Hasegawa to take charge of military affairs in Korea. He arrived on the 13th, and shortly after went to Wonsan to inspect matters in that vicinity. The news of considerable Russian activity in northeast Korea seemed to need careful watching, and the presence of a general competent to do whatever was necessary to keep them in check.

The laying of the last rail of the Seoul-Fusan Railway was an event of great importance to Korea. It adds materially to the wealth of the country, both by forming a means of rapid communication and by enhancing the value of all the territory through which it runs. It also gives Japan such a large vested interest here that it becomes, in a sense, her guarantee to prevent the country from falling into the hands of other powers. But, like all good things, it has its dangers as well.

Mr. Megata, the new Adviser to the Finance Department, arrived in the autumn, and began a study of Korean monetary and financial conditions. This should have been an augury of good, for Korean finance has always been in a more or less chaotic condition, but, as we shall see, it spelled worse disaster than ever.

Late in the year Mr. Stevens, the newly appointed Adviser of the Foreign Department, took up his duties, which, though less important than those of Mr. Megata, nevertheless gave promise that the foreign relations of the government would be handled exclusively in the interests of Japan.

The year 1905 gives us a complete picture of Japanese methods in handling an alien people. It has been said that Japan has much the same work to do in Korea that England has in Egypt. Let us see how far the methods of these two powerful governments coincide. It has been said, again, that up to the present time Japan has not been able to show what she can do in this line, because she has been so busy with the war, but we would ask the reader to note that an American gentleman who has resided many years in Formosa made the remark

publicly that the methods used by Japan in Korea are precisely those that have been used in Formosa ever since the China-Japan war of 1894.

The whole Japanese army is made up of men of the upper middle class. No man of the lower classes can stand in the ranks of that army. It is generally known that the relative social grade of the Japanese soldier is much higher than in any other country. These are men who have imbibed the old Samurai spirit and who in just that proportion hold themselves above the lower classes. It is for this reason that such a remarkable change came over the face of affairs in Korea after the Japanese armies had passed and the thousands of adventurers and self-seekers followed in its train. Unlawful action by a Japanese soldier was almost unknown, and the Koreans were constrained to lay aside their old-time suspicion and receive them as harbingers of a new and better era. When, therefore, the heavy influx of low-class Japanese began, and they, on the strength of the prowess of Japanese arms, began to treat the Koreans as the very scum of the earth and to perpetrate all sorts of outrages, it was inevitable that a mighty reaction should take place. It has never been explained why the Japanese authorities did not hold back this tide of immigration until the war was over and proper steps could be taken to establish sufficient legal machinery to govern the ruffians properly.

It will be asked what specific evidence is there that Koreans were ill-treated. This question must be met and answered. The following are a few of the cases that have come within the notice of the writer and of other American residents in Seoul and other parts of Korea, and which can be thoroughly attested.

An American gentleman stood upon a railway station platform where a score or more of Japanese were waiting for a train. An aged Korean, leaning upon a staff, mounted the platform and looked about him with interest. It is likely that he had never before seen a railroad train. A half-naked Japanese employee of the road seized the old man by the beard and threw

him heavily upon the station platform. The Korean arose with difficulty and picked up his cane to go. The Japanese then threw him backwards off the platform on to the rails, and then stood back and laughed, as did all the other Japanese. Apparently there was not a single Japanese in all that company who saw in this event anything but a good joke. The old Korean was too severely hurt to rise, but some of his Korean friends came and picked him up and took him away. The reader will wonder why the American gentleman did not interfere. Well, the fact is, he knew he would be uselessly sacrificing his own life. If he had raised a finger in the Korean's defence, the chances of his getting away without being killed would have been less than one in a hundred. At another station there is a little side-path where Koreans are forbidden to walk, but there is no sign whatever so to indicate. A Korean stepped out upon this walk, and was instantly attacked by three or four Japanese and pounded into insensibility. It was a day or more before he regained consciousness, and he was not able to leave his house for weeks.

The Japanese look upon the Koreans as lawful game, and the latter, having no proper tribunals where they can obtain redress, do not dare to retaliate. If they complain at Korean courts, the magistrate lifts hands of horror and asks how in the world he is to get anything out of the Japanese, and if he applies to a Japanese court he is usually turned away without a hearing. This is hard to believe, but the following facts go far to prove it.

A Korean brought in from the country some Korean money to exchange for Japanese money. He deposited his cash with the leading Japanese broker, taking the latter's note of hand, payable at sight to bearer. Two days later he came to have the note cashed, and the broker said he had already paid it, but had failed in the hurry of the moment to take the note. The Korean tried three times to place the matter before the proper Japanese authorities, but was thwarted each time, and when at last, by

the aid of a foreigner, he got the case taken up, he was roundly scolded for obtaining foreign help, — but the money was paid. An American gentleman was served the same trick by the same broker, and, though the Japanese authorities granted that it was a perfectly clear case, he recovered the money only after nine months of hard work, and then without interest. A Korean bought a valuable business block from a Japanese, but when he went to claim it the Japanese tenant who had rented it from the former owner refused to leave, on the plea that he had no other place to go. Time and again the owner applied to the Japanese for redress, and it was only after a foreigner interfered and pressed the matter that the Japanese authorities were shamed into doing tardy justice.

The trouble has been that, however good may have been the plans of the highest men in Japan, they have not a sufficient body of agents who are broad-minded enough to carry out the plans in the spirit they are given. To illustrate this: in the building and repairing of the railroad it is found cheaper to use Koreans than Japanese. The head office orders the work to be done and says that Koreans must be treated properly. There it ends. The Japanese headmen of the working gangs go into the villages all along the way, and at the point of the revolver or sword compel Koreans by the hundreds to go and work at one-third of a day's wage. They have the option of making a money payment in lieu of work, but they have to pay, for each day that they get off, twice what they would have received. In this way one township handed over some twenty thousand dollars of blackmail, and for part of it they had to pay *twelve per cent a month* to money-lenders!

The Koreans have suffered especially in the matter of real estate. On the strength of Korea's promise to supply all the land necessary for Japanese military operations, the latter have gone in and seized the most valuable property in the vicinity of the largest towns in Korea. When the people ask for payment, they are told to go to their own government for payment.

But the Japanese know that the government has no money and that the land is simply confiscated. But not only so; men claiming to be connected with the Japanese army go out into the country districts and seize any land they like, repeating simply the formula "This is for military purposes." The writer has been repeatedly asked to interfere in such cases of fraud. Koreans have come hundreds of miles to sell their farms to a foreigner for a few cents each, simply that they might be under a foreigner's name, and so escape wanton seizure. During the year 1905 there was no such thing as justice for the Korean either from the private Japanese or from the officials. The military put their hands upon eight square miles of the most valuable land near Seoul simply for the building of barracks and parade grounds for twelve thousand men, when experts affirm that one-sixteenth of that space would have been ample. That land could not be bought in open market for six million dollars, but the Japanese knew the government could not pay a proper price, so they gave two hundred thousand dollars, to cover the cost of removal only. And this is all the Koreans could ever hope to get. The most elementary laws of human right and justice have been daily and hourly trampled under foot. Hardly an effort has been made to carry out any reform that would better the condition of the Korean people.

Mark the action of the man who controlled the finances of the country, — a Japanese. The country was flooded with counterfeit nickels, made largely by Japanese in Osaka, and brought over to Korea by the millions. The Korean currency fell to a ruinous discount, and Japanese merchants were suffering severely because of the rapid fluctuations of exchange. The Adviser determined that the Korean government should borrow several million yen from Japan, and with it make a new currency to substitute for the one in use. When it was learned that Korea was to pay six per cent for this money, Korean financiers came forward and said that they would lend their government the necessary money at a far lower rate. They did it to keep Korea out

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VIEWS OF PICTURESQUE KOREA

(*a*) Pyeng-yang, looking down the Ta-dong River from the wall
(*b*) A pleasure-house on the wall of Su-wun

of debt to Japan, but the Adviser refused to allow it. The money must be borrowed from Japan at the higher rate. A few million dollars' worth of nickels were made in Japan, where the Japanese enjoyed the profit, which amounted to over fifty per cent, and the nickels were sent to Korea. The Adviser announced that on the 1st of June, or about then, everybody who brought nickels would receive the new ones at par with the Japanese money, but would receive one new one for two of the old. As the old nickels were at a discount of 240, this would mean that anyone with capital could buy up old nickels at 240, and exchange them at 200. Chinese and Japanese merchants leaped to do so, and the market was sucked dry of money. When the day of exchanging came, it was found that the supply of new nickels was entirely inadequate. So the exchange was put off for two months; then for two months more. Meanwhile the Korean merchants were going to the wall because they could not meet their notes, owing to the tightness of the money market. Some of them were trying to save themselves by borrowing from Japanese usurers at six per cent a month. At this most painful juncture the Emperor proposed to lend some three hundred thousand dollars of his private funds to his suffering merchants; but when he sent his cheque to the Japanese bank, where his funds were deposited, the Japanese Adviser ordered payment stopped, and would not let him draw out his private funds even to help the merchants in their desperate straits. There is no language too strong in which to denounce this outrage.

In the northern city of Pyeng-yang the Japanese carried on enormous confiscations of land. They even enclosed with their stakes property belonging to American citizens, and when the owners complained to the Japanese Consul they were told that it would be all right, but that they had better not remove the stakes at present. Nor did the Americans dare to do so; for though they themselves would have been safe, their servants would have been seized by Japanese and cruelly beaten. A Korean in that town was ordered by a private Japanese to sell

his house for a quarter of its value. He demurred at this, but was seized, dragged away to a neighbouring Japanese barracks, and given a severe beating. In his shame and anger at this disgrace he took morphine and killed himself. Almost before his body was cold the Japanese came and demanded that his widow sell the house at the price suggested. She replied that she would die first. How it ended the writer has never heard. A Korean boatman attempted to go under the bridge at Pyengyang while it was under construction. This was forbidden, but there was no proper sign to indicate the fact. The Japanese railway coolies threw him out of his boat. He clung to some timbers in the water, but the Japanese beat his hands with railroad bolts until his fingers were broken, and he fell off and drowned. Two days later the murdered man's father, having secured the body, brought it to the Japanese Consul and demanded justice. He was driven away with the statement that the Consul would have nothing to do with the case. The criminals were well known and could have been captured with ease.

In the city of Seoul, almost within a stone's-throw of the Japanese Consulate, a Korean widow came to the house of the writer and begged him to buy her house for five cents, and put his name on the door-post, because she had reason to believe that unless she sold the house for half price to a Japanese living next door he would undermine the wall of her house and let it fall upon her head. The Koreans say deliberately that time and again naked Japanese have run into Korean houses and shocked the Korean women outrageously, simply in order to make the owner willing to sell out at any price.

An American resident in one of the ports of Korea related to the writer the case of a Korean landowner who lost his property through the following piece of trickery. A Japanese employed a disreputable Korean to make out a false deed of the land and, armed with this, went to take possession. The real owner exhibited the true and incontestable deeds; but when the matter was referred to the Japanese authorities, the false deeds

carried the day, and a man who had held the property for years was summarily ejected.

A bishop of the Methodist Church in America was travelling with two missionaries through the country near Seoul. They had to cross a railroad embankment that was in construction. They walked a few rods along the embankment, and because of this they were attacked by a gang of Japanese coolies, and the two missionaries were severely hurt. It was only by the merest good luck that any of them escaped with their lives. No punishment at all commensurate with the crime was inflicted. A Japanese refused to pay his fare on the American electric cars and was put off. He ran into a near-by Korean rice shop, turned the rice out of a bag, placed it on the track and lay down upon it. He defied the Korean motormen to ride over him. No one dared to touch him, for this would have been the signal for a bloody reprisal on the part of the Japanese who lived all about. When the Americans complain of such things, they are told by the Japanese authorities that they can be easily avoided by employing Japanese.

As the year advanced, the Japanese kept at work gathering in the material resources of the country. Fishing rights along the whole coast were demanded and given. No one who knows what Japanese fishermen are like will doubt for a moment that the Koreans will be driven from the fishing grounds. Then the coast-trading and riparian rights were seized, looking toward a complete absorption of the large coastwise and river traffic. Korean methods are slower and more cumbersome, and herein lies Japan's excuse for driving Koreans from the business.

The signing of the Treaty of Peace with Russia at Portsmouth was the signal for a still more active policy in Korea. The American people had been brought to believe that the Korean people were as unworthy of regard as the Japanese were above criticism, and steps were taken to arrange for the declaration of a protectorate over the peninsular kingdom.

It must be remembered that Japan had solemnly promised,

at the beginning of the war, to preserve the independence of Korea, but it now appeared that that promise was made solely as a preparation for the act which was to follow. The seizure of Korea and the extinction of her independence has been called a logical outcome of events. Russia had agreed to recognise Japan's preponderating influence in Korea, but what had that to do with Japan's definite and explicit promise to preserve the independence of Korea? It was evidently only the removal of the last obstacle which stood in the way of the breaking of that promise. But Japan saw that it would be necessary to proceed with caution. The only way to secure a protectorate without a manifest breach of faith was, first, to secure the acquiescence of the Korean government. If Korea could be induced to ask Japan to assume a protectorate, all would go well. Here was the crux of the situation.

Early in the autumn of 1905 the Emperor was approached with this suggestion, but he repudiated it instantly. He recognised the predominance of Japanese power in Korea and acquiesced in the advisorships in the various departments, but when it came to turning over the whole government and nation bodily to Japan, without the least hope of a future rehabilitation of the national independence, he refused in the plainest terms. He saw very well that the Japanese were determined to carry the day, but he knew that if he held firm it could not be done without arousing the indignation of the world. He determined to lodge a protest at Washington, forestalling violent action on the part of Japan. The first clause of the treaty of 1883 between Korea and the United States says that if either of the contracting parties is injured by a third party the other shall interfere with her good offices to effect an amicable settlement.

It was impossible to lodge this protest in Washington through the Korean Foreign Office, for that was in control of a person thoroughly "in the sleeve" of Japan. The only thing to do was to send a personal and private communication to the President of the United States, calling attention to Japanese

wrongs in Korea, and asking the President to investigate the matter and render Korea what help he could.

That message was despatched from Korea in October at the hand of the writer, but the Japanese surmised what was being done. A Japanese spy on board the steamer at Yokohama discovered the exact hour when the message would arrive in Washington, and from that very hour events were hurried to their culmination in the Korean capital.

Marquis Ito was sent to Seoul with definite instructions. Korea was to be induced to sign away her national existence voluntarily. Many conferences took place between the Japanese authorities and the Korean Cabinet, but without result. The Koreans stood firm on the treaty of 1904, in which Japan guaranteed the independence of the country, and nothing could make them budge. Not one of the Cabinet consented. It was quite clear that stronger agencies would have to be used. Finally, after a very strenuous conference at the Japanese legation, the whole meeting adjourned to the audience chamber of the Emperor, and the curtain went up on the last scene of the tragedy. The Emperor and every one of his ministers stood firm. They would die sooner than acquiesce. Repeated exhortations and inducements were offered, but the Koreans were immovable. When this deadlock occurred, the scenes were shifted a little, and Japanese gendarmes and police suddenly appeared and surrounded the audience chamber and blocked every approach to the imperial presence. The Emperor, feeling sure that personal injury was determined upon, retired to a little anteroom. No sane person can deny that he had sufficient reason to fear. The strongest man in the Cabinet was the Prime Minister, Han Kyu-sul, and it was evident that only by segregating him and handling the Cabinet without him could the desired result be accomplished. When, therefore, the Prime Minister retired to the apartment where the Emperor was, supposably with the intention of conferring with him, he was followed by Japanese armed officials and detained in a side room. The Marquis there plead

with him to give in, but he was firm. Leaving him there, practically in durance, the Marquis returned to the rest of the Cabinet, who were very naturally alarmed at the non-appearance of the Prime Minister. The moment must have been one of great suspense. Hedged in by armed Japanese, their official chief spirited away and perhaps killed, there is little wonder that another turn of the screw resulted in the defection of several of the Cabinet, and at last a paper was signed by a majority of the ministers present, after a clause had been added to the effect that at some future day when Korea is strong enough and wealthy enough to resume her independence it will be given back to her. The Foreign Minister signed this document, and the seal was attached. There is some question as to just how this last was done. Some say that the seal was purloined from the office by Japanese and the document was stamped by them. However this may be, we have here the picture of how the agreement was put through, and the reader and the world may judge for themselves how far it was voluntary on the part of the Korean government.

When this had been done, the Japanese authorities announced in Washington that Korea had voluntarily entered into an agreement granting Japan a protectorate over the country, and the American government, apparently without consulting with Korea as to the truth of the statement, recognised the validity of Japan's claim, and almost immediately removed the legation from Seoul, and at the same time informed the Korean legation in Washington that diplomatic business with Korea would thereafter be carried on through Tokyo. The petition of the Emperor arrived in Washington before action had been taken by the government, but, though its arrival had been announced to the President, it was not received until after action had been taken, when it was found to be too late. It is not our province to discuss here the question whether this action was in accord with the friendly relations that existed for so many years between Korea and America, but there can be no doubt whatever that

the Koreans looked upon it as a distinct act of treachery. Even while the whole Korean people were convulsed by the high-handed act of Japan, and some of the very highest Korean officials were seeking oblivion of their country's wrongs in suicide, the American Minister in Seoul was feasting the Japanese who had compassed the destruction of Korean nationality. Can it be wondered at that the feeling of confidence which Korea reposed in the friendship of America should have experienced a sudden and sharp reaction. Americans of every class had been telling Korea for a quarter of a century that the American flag stood for fairness and honesty, that we had no purely selfish interests to subserve, but stood for right, whether that right was accompanied by might or not; but when the pinch came we were the first to desert her, and that in the most contemptuous way, without even saying good-bye.

The appeal of the Emperor to the President of the United States cited the fact that Korea has heretofore received many tokens of good-will from the American government and people, that the American representatives have been sympathetic and helpful, and that American teachers of all kinds have done valuable work. He granted that the government had not been what it should have been, and that many mistakes had been committed, but he urged that whatever the Korean people might think of their government, they were passionately attached to the real Korea, to their nationality; that they had few things to be proud of, and that if their nationality and independence, which had been guaranteed by Japan, were swept away, there would be left no incentive for the people to advance. He acknowledged the need of Japanese supervision, and declared that the advice of Japan had been and would be followed along all lines that looked toward the betterment of conditions in the peninsula. He intimated that the acts committed by the Japanese during the past year did not warrant the giving to Japan of complete control in Korea, for it would make Japanese residents there all the more contemptuous of the private rights of

Koreans. He urged that Japan would be doing herself an injury, in breaking her promise to preserve the independence of Korea, for it would make other powers rightly suspicious of Japan's good faith elsewhere in the Far East. In conclusion, he asked the President to bring to bear upon this question the same breadth of view and the same sympathy which had characterised his distinguished career in other fields; and if, after a careful investigation, the facts above enumerated and others that would come to light should seem to warrant him in so doing, he should use his friendly offices to prevent the disaster to Korea which seemed imminent. It will be noted that the Emperor asked that the President's action be based upon a careful examination of all the facts, and not upon mere hearsay. Whether Korea's side of the question was ever presented in detail to the American Executive may never be known, but the method of procedure adopted by the United States government does not warrant such a conclusion.

When future historians, looking back across the years, shall view with dispassionate eyes the contemptuous attitude and the precipitate action of the American government in this case which involves the very life of the Korean nation, they will scarcely be able to so word the facts as to bring added glory to the annals of the American people.

Min Yong-whan, the most cultured and public-spirited Oriental in the range of my acquaintance, after desperate efforts to secure a reversal of the forced action depriving Korea of her independence, committed suicide. His monument, and that of other patriots who followed his example, will ever stand before the Korean people as irrefragable proof that, whatever interested calumniators may say, it is as true in Korea as elsewhere that *dulcit pro patria mori.*

CHAPTER XV

REVENUE

THE revenue of the Korean government is derived from a dozen or more different sources, among the most important of which are (1) land tax, (2) house tax, (3) salt tax, (4) customs duties, (5) ginseng monopoly, (6) gold mines, (7) fish tax, (8) fur tax, (9) tobacco tax, (10) gate tax, (11) forests, (12) guilds, (13) licenses, (14) minting, (15) poll tax, (16) boat tax, (17) cow-hide tax, (18) paper tax, (19) pawn tax. These include forms of taxation which are now obsolete as well as those actually in force.

The prefect of each of the three hundred and forty-one districts in Korea is supposed to have in his office a map and a detailed description of every piece of arable land in the district, excepting kitchen-gardens. This forms the basis of the land tax, which yields two-thirds of the national revenue. Although there are no fences, the limits of the fields are clearly marked by earthen banks or by the natural conformation of the land, and no farmer would dare to throw two fields together or divide a field into two without the cognisance and consent of the local prefect; and even then the latter would have to obtain permission from the central government. This arable land is considered under two heads, — rice-fields and ordinary fields. The owner of each plot of land owns a deed for the same, stamped with the magistrate's seal or signed with his name. In many instances where property has been in the same family for several centuries, these deeds may have been lost or destroyed; but if the land is sold, new deeds must be issued. The prefect's records, as well as the deed of each field, indicate the relative grade of the latter. There are six grades of rice-fields and three of ordinary

fields. These grades are determined by several factors, — the natural fertility of the soil, the ability to irrigate, the roughness or smoothness of the topography, and the lay of the land; for if it slopes toward the north it is considered much less valuable than if it slopes toward the south.

New fields are constantly being made, which for a few years are not shown on the prefect's records and do not pay taxes to the government. For this reason the authorities periodically order a remeasurement of arable land, or rather a readjustment of the prefectural records, so as to include the new fields. There is no definite interval of time between these readjustments. Sometimes half a century passes without one, and then again they may follow each other by an interval of only a few years. Korean history shows that with the beginning of each new reign, or the inauguration of a new government policy, or under stress of some national calamity which has emptied the treasury, a readjustment of land values is likely to be ordered. A royal commission goes about and examines the new fields and estimates their value, noting carefully all the conditions above enumerated. They do not actually measure the land, but they find out how long it will take to plough it with a single bullock, and how much seed grain it requires to plant. By these means they estimate how many *kyul* there are in the field. Now a *kyul* is one hundred man-loads of unthreshed rice, and each man-load is composed of ten sheaves. Ten per cent is the legal rate, and so a field of thirty *kyul* would yield the government three *kyul*. This again must be reduced to threshed rice in the bag, as that is the form in which, until very recently, the tax has been paid. It was a very clumsy arrangement.

The status of a field being once definitely settled, it is put down on the books as being liable to a definite amount of taxation each year, and this tax is due whether the year is a good or a bad one, whether the field is tilled or left fallow. It is only by a special dispensation of the central government that the tax on a single field can be remitted, whatever be the disabilities

THE KOREAN FARMER

Showing methods of ploughing the soil and threshing of grain

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under which the owner or tenant may be labouring. In other words, the government takes no chances. And yet it may be that when we take into account the great infrequency of serious famines in Korea, this system is the best for the farmer; for were the regular tax the only charge on the field there would be every incentive to cultivate the soil with care, to fertilise it heavily, and to make it produce the very most of which it is capable. As a fact, however, the farmer is frequently subjected to further imposts which, though illegal, are unavoidable under a system which gives officials no opportunity to gain a competence except by indirection.

Rice being the staple article of food, it naturally forms the measure of value. Until very recently the farmer had to pay all his taxes in rice, and therefore was obliged to barter his barley, millet or beans in order to obtain the wherewithal to settle his debts to the government. To-day all taxes are collected in money. This simplifies taxation in one sense, but in another sense it complicates matters, as we shall see. The tax is ten Korean dollars a *kyul.*

Such is the law in regard to the land tax, but there are great discrepancies in its operation and administration. The prefect and all his underlings receive a nominal salary, which is annually deducted from the tax money or rice which is to be sent up to Seoul, but it is notorious that this salary is insufficient and that it is supplemented by various means. As these are an actual charge upon the productive portion of the population, they require mention. The amount of special taxation depends upon the personal character of the prefect and his deputies, the *ajuns,* and we can indicate only the general lines upon which it is levied. We have already seen that the tax is levied on the estimated average yield of the land. Now, if this average yield is exceeded in a year of plenty or through unusual thrift on the part of the farmer, a portion of the overplus or increment is commonly appropriated by the *ajuns,* who share it with their chief; but it all depends upon the status of the owner of the field. If he be

a country gentleman who has influence at Seoul, the *ajuns* may not dare to take even the legal rate of tax. If he has slightly less influence, he may pay the legal tax on good years but less in years of scarcity. If he has no influence, he may pay the legal tax but nothing extra, in case of overplus. It is the common farmer who has practically no rights in the case and must always pay in full, and whatever proportion of the overplus the *ajuns* may require; or if there be no overplus, he may still have to give up part of the nine-tenths remaining after his legal tax is paid. No fields within the walls of Seoul are subject to taxation. The annual amount received from the land tax by the government is in the neighbourhood of eight million Korean dollars; but exchange varies so much that this may mean anywhere from two million to three million in American currency. The lack of an adequate currency in the country districts makes it difficult for the farmers to pay their taxes in money, and so they often turn over their rice to the *ajuns,* who act as agents for its sale. These *ajuns* are not there for their health merely, and this form of trade is one of their handsomest perquisites.

With the exception of Seoul and its western and southern suburbs, every house in Korea is subject to a tax of fifteen hundred Seoul cash, or sixty cents, irrespective of the size or quality of the structure. The annual amount collected from this source is about half a million dollars. At sixty cents a house, this would mean something less than a million houses; and reckoning five people to the house, we should have only five millions as the population. Of course this is an absurdly low estimate, and the conclusion is inevitable, either that all the houses are not taxed or that there is a serious leakage in transit. When a new house is built, the magistrate gives a deed for it, and from that time it is supposed to be on the tax list. When a house burns or is swept away by a flood, the tax is always remitted.

All salt is made by evaporating sea-water; and the "works" are so easily accessible and salt is such an indispensable commodity that this government, like most oriental ones, finds it

a reliable and lucrative source of revenue. The tax is levied on the actual amount produced, and amounts to about four per cent *ad valorem*. This seems small compared with the ten per cent levied on cereals, but it must be remembered that in the case of the latter nature does by far the larger part of the work. The evaporation of salt is exceedingly laborious. The apparatus is costly, considering the annual output, the cost of fuel is heavy, and the goods are marketed only in spring and autumn. For these reasons a heavier tax than four per cent would kill the business. This tax brings about ninety thousand dollars into the treasury.

Ginseng is one of the most distinctive products of Korea. The Chinese, who are its principal purchasers, consider the Korean red ginseng the best on the market. The culture and preparation of this root is a government monopoly, and it is carried on in two ways. The government owns certain ginseng farms, and carries them on through skilled agents, but more often it gives licenses to responsible parties who turn over the entire crop to the government. After the latter has marketed the goods in China it deducts its own twenty or twenty-five per cent and turns the rest over to the tenant of the farm. The annual income from this source varies from one hundred and fifty thousand to three hundred thousand Korean dollars.

All minerals are supposed to belong to the government, and no man has a right to open a mine even on his own ground without special permission from the Department of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works at Seoul. If a man wants to mine gold (and by far the greater part is of the placer variety), he applies at the bureau at Seoul, and if he has influence enough he will succeed in buying a license to open a placer mine in a certain specified locality. For this he pays a round sum, though it may not come within the purview of the law. After opening the mine he will be called upon to pay over to the agents of the government probably sixty per cent of his gross earnings. The rate differs with different circumstances, but at the lowest it is enor-

mously high. The idea seems to be that as he is working government property he must divide the proceeds, just as a farmer often does when he works another man's land. The annual revenue from this source is subject to great fluctuations. Sometimes it rises to nearly half a million, and then it may drop to a hundred thousand.

Copper mining is a considerable industry in Korea; but as the profits are relatively smaller than those of gold mining, the government takes only thirty per cent of the proceeds, or, more exactly, five ounces out of every sixteen. It is difficult to get at the figures to show what revenue is derived from this source. There are a number of iron mines, but they are carried on in only a small way comparatively. The government receives a tax of about nine per cent of the gross output. There are said to be over fifty iron mines in the peninsula, mostly in Kang-wun Province, east of Seoul.

Korean fisheries annually render a neat sum to the national exchequer. The tax is levied not on the amount of fish caught but upon the boats themselves. These are of about ten grades, according to the number of the crew and the size of the nets. Such is the law, but it must be confessed that when the money is actually collected cognisance is taken of the amount of fish caught, and the amount of money paid bears no special relation to the sum received by the central government. The Korean government possesses no navy, but from time immemorial it has owned a large number of boats along the coast, which are supposed to be ready for use in time of war. These are regularly let out to fishermen, and the revenue from them is naturally much larger than from the native-owned craft. Of late years these boats have been sold in considerable numbers to the fishermen, but so far as we can learn the proceeds have not sufficed to put the Korean navy on a firm footing!

Furs have always been an important product of Korea, and have frequently figured in the tribute to China, and in indemnities paid to Chinese, Manchu or Mongol. They have been

considered as a sort of government monopoly, and gangs of trappers have been regularly sent out by the authorities, the entire catch being taken by the government and paid for. If other people take furs, especially sea-otter, sable, tiger or leopard, the rule is to carry them to the nearest prefect, who is sure to buy them in for the government. Within the last few months a Korean in Whang-hai Province got into serious trouble because he carried a tiger skin directly to Chemulpo, and sold it to a foreigner rather than offer it first to the prefect. The foreigner doubtless paid him six times as much as the prefect would have given. The method adopted makes it quite impossible to estimate the amount annually received, as it never appears in the columns of dollars and cents.

All merchant craft are subject to a tax which is levied upon their carrying capacity. About three cash per bag is collected at the port of entry. This is only a small fraction of one per cent. Before the days when government taxes were payable in money, these boats often paid by bringing government rice up to the capital, just as in rural districts in America farmers "work out" their taxes on the road.

The forests of Korea are considered crown lands, and no one can cut timber without special permission. The tax is paid in kind and amounts to three per cent of the product. Cowhides, in which the trade is considerable, form a special source of revenue; the hides are graded into three classes and pay a tax of twenty, sixteen and twelve cents apiece, respectively. The various guilds of Seoul, of which we shall speak at length in another place, pay no regular taxes, but they are frequently called upon to help in various forms of government works. Sometimes they are required to repair a road over which a royal procession is to pass; and in case of a royal funeral or marriage, each guild is supposed to supply a gorgeous banner to be carried in the procession, and the members of the guilds are called upon to act as bearers of the catafalque of the dead.

Up to the time of the China-Japan war every man was

obliged to carry on his person a small piece of wood on which were written his name, the year of his birth and his rank. Anyone who failed to carry this tag was considered an outlaw. It was called the "name-tag." Every two or three years, or every year in which a great national examination was held, all these tags were changed or renewed. Each bore the stamp of the mayor of Seoul or of the country prefect, and the application of this stamp cost the sum of five country cash. This was a sort of poll tax, but was discontinued when the use of the name-tag was abolished.

There never has been a tax upon spirituous liquors, nor any license required for their sale. In country districts there is a slight tax on the malt used in making beer. This is made of barley and comes in the form of round cakes. The tax on each cake is one cash.

Besides these regular taxes, the government sells licenses for a large number of industries. These are not all worthy of mention, but among them we find the pawn-shop license, which amounts to two dollars a month in the case of large shops. The cutting of firewood in government preserves is carried on under license.

It must not be imagined that these are the only sources of income. There is another long list of "donations" to the palace. These are not actual taxes, and yet they are so fixed in Korean custom that they amount to the same thing, and their discontinuance would be the signal for an instant and searching investigation. These donations take the form of fruits and vegetables. Certain districts are noted for the production of particular kinds and superior qualities of fruits and vegetables. For instance, the Pongsan pears, Namyang persimmons, Sunchun walnuts, Poeun jujubes, Kwangju tobacco and Kuchang turnips are the best in the country. The growers annually send up the best selection of their products for use by the imperial household. The amount is not regulated by law, but the prefect is sure to see to it that the quantity and quality of these gifts do not fall far

below the limit established by custom. A failure to attend to this matter would soon get him into trouble.

Several kinds of sea products are also sent up, such as edible sea-weed, beche-de-mer, dried clams, pearls, cuttle-fish, cod and other denizens of the deep; among industrial products, linen and cotton cloth, fans, screens, mats, tables, cabinets, pipes, paper, human hair, silk, furs, horses, hats, head-bands, pens, ink, candles, grass-cloth, tiger skins, deer horns, mountain ginseng, game, honey, ginger, crockery and porcelain, medicines, embroideries, cranes, musical instruments and coral. These are a few of the varieties.

The most reliable source of income is the Maritime Customs, and it forms the only asset that the government can use as collateral for the purpose of making loans. Up to the early eighties there was no such institution, but in 1882 the government requested that the Chinese Customs send a man to open up a service in Korea. P. G. von Mollendorff, Esq., was sent, and with him a considerable staff of foreigners. The service was established on lines similar to those in China, but after a few years Mr. Von Mollendorff resigned, and the service came more directly under the Chinese control. From the very first it was a decided success, one of the very few that Korea has achieved along financial lines; and under the admirable management of J. McLeavy Brown, C. M. G., it has formed an anchor to windward that has helped the government ride out many a storm, not merely financial but political as well. The subject of imports and exports will be mentioned elsewhere, but under the head of revenue it will suffice to say that, according to the latest reports, the gross value of a year's trade is approximately fifty million yen or twenty-five million dollars, on practically all of which a small import or export duty is imposed.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CURRENCY

WE may safely say that before the days of Kija, 1122 B. C., the Koreans had no money. All trade was done by barter. Kija probably brought with him from China a quantity of the coins in circulation there. Just what these were we do not know, but they may have been the peculiar "knife coins" that are found to-day in every good numismatic collection. There is good evidence from Korean literature that Kija put out a form of government bank note in the shape of a square piece of linen with his own seal upon it. These were nominally redeemable, but practically they could not have been so, if they were used to any great extent, for Kija could not have brought enough of the coins from China to redeem any considerable amount of "paper" money.

In the days of Silla, 57 B. C.–918 A. D., there was a considerable mixture of Chinese, the descendants of people who had fled from China at the time the Great Wall was built. These people doubtless taught the southern Koreans the value of a coinage. The earliest Silla coins are said to have been octagonal in shape with a hole in the centre. Another was the "Star Money," which bore the impress of two stars on one side and the legend "Heaven-sanctioned Eastern Treasure" on the other. The "Boy-child" coin was in the shape of the Siamese twins, and it bore the inscription "From Childhood to Manhood," referring to the fact that it is necessary at all stages of life. There was also the "Dragon Coin," the "Tortoise Coin" and the "Seven Star Money." The latter has a representation of the constellation of the Great Bear, and the flattering inscription "As faithful as the Stars." In Koryu days again, 918–

1392, there was an issue of "linen money," which went under the name "Dirty Linen"; not a nice name for such a nice thing as money. It was in the latter days of that dynasty that a regular issue of "cash" was made, similar to the cash used to-day. A silver coin in the shape of a bottle was also put out, but it was soon debased by admixture of copper, zinc and other baser metals, and so fell into disrepute. During the long years of Mongol supremacy the currency of that empire circulated freely in Korea, but all this came to an end about the middle of the fourteenth century.

After the founding of the present dynasty in 1392 the old silver, copper and linen money was continued in circulation, but after a time the government issued the famous *yŭpjŭn*, or "Leaf Money," which has held its own in the country districts until the present day with an obstinacy that is worthy of a better cause. During the past fifty years all sorts of tricks have been played with Korean coinage, and the government has realised heavy sums by minting, but of course no government can make money by coining it. The intrinsic value and the cost of making should equal the face value; but they cared nothing for this, and time and again new issues were forced on the people, only to fall to twenty per cent of their face value. The provinces would have none of this, but it circulated in and near Seoul. A rather pretty silver coin was issued in the eighties. It had a blue enamel centre. It was all bought up and hoarded within two years. The same happened to another silver coinage of a later date. At last the government unfortunately took up the nickel five-cent piece. The trouble with this coin was that it was of low enough denomination to be useful as circulating medium, but at the same time of enough value to be worth while counterfeiting. The cash had been so infinitesimal in value, and the plant necessarily so large for making it, that no one could afford to counterfeit it. But as soon as the nickel took the field an army of counterfeiters sprang up. The Japanese supplied the necessary machinery and smuggled it into

the country, and at the same time hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of the stuff was turned out in Japan and brought over to Korea. This was a great injury to Koreans and also to legitimate Japanese trade, for the nickels fell and fell, until at one time they were at a discount of one hundred and fifty per cent. Both the Korean and Japanese governments made strenuous efforts to put a stop to this demoralisation, but so long as the Korean government continued to put out coins with a face value of five cents, and an intrinsic value of only one and a half cents, they found it impossible to compete with the counterfeiters, and the two went along side by side until a dozen or so of the latter were executed, and then it became too serious a matter, and the counterfeiters suspended operations.

Only the oldest foreign residents of Seoul will remember the great mat sheds which were erected from time to time and in which the old-time cash was minted. The smelting furnaces were mere holes in the ground, and the naked operatives stood astride of the glowing orifices and reached down with long tongues and seized the edges of the crucibles that held the molten metal. At night, when there was no other light but that which escaped from the furnace mouths and lit the rough interior of the shed with a livid, greenish glow, it was a picture straight from Dante's Inferno. The metal was poured into moulds which contained some fifty impressions of the pattern, and when the casting came out it looked like rough lace, the coins all being connected by narrow bars of metal. These were broken up, and the coins were strung on square metal rods that just fitted the hole in the coin. The ends of this rod were then put in a rude vice, and men with enormous coarse files ground down the edges of a thousand or more of the coins at a time. It was exceedingly rough work, and it was done just as cheaply as it could be done and still pass the very superficial examination that it would be subjected to. After having their edges filed, the coins were dumped into a shallow trough set in the ground, and sand and water were added. Two men sat down

on the ground at opposite ends of this trough and pushed the coins back and forth with their bare feet. This was the final polish. The only thing left to do was to string the wretched things on rough straw rope or string, making a knot between every hundred pieces. When finished, the strings looked not unlike festoons of link sausages, though perhaps a trifle less digestible. In four-fifths of the country this is still the only currency that is accepted. One wonders how any large transactions can be carried on with such extremely awkward money. A horse-load of it would not come to more than fifteen dollars in gold. I have estimated roughly that the mere transfer of money costs on an average one-tenth of one per cent of every monetary transaction.

There is no such thing as a genuine bank in Korea, and yet the people have certain expedients by which they avoid in part the transportation of actual cash from one part of the land to another. There are certain large firms or guilds in Seoul whose notes of hand are accepted quite generally, and a certain crude method of exchange has been common. A merchant in the country may take the money which the prefect desires to transmit to the government treasury and buy merchandise with it, bring it up to Seoul and out of the proceeds pay over to the treasury the amount originally received. At certain seasons of the year it is necessary to send large sums of money to the country to pay for the barley, rice and a thousand other things that are required by the people of the metropolis. The merchants who have this in hand will therefore pay over to the treasury a certain amount of cash and receive an order on some country prefect who is waiting for a chance to send up the annual taxes to the capital. The order is honoured by him, and so both parties gain by the transaction. The taxes that the people have paid to their prefect come back to them in large measure by the sale of their produce. This custom is of comparatively recent origin, for in former times and for centuries the taxes were all payable in rice or other grain.

From time immemorial barter has been the principal method of trade, and to a very large extent the same may be said to-day. In many parts of Korea money is a sort of luxury that, while pleasant to have, is by no means essential to comfort. In the capital, the open ports and some of the more important inland towns everything is secured by purchase, but this includes only a small fraction of the whole population. In the country districts, for the most part, commodities are secured at periodical "markets," called *chang* by the Koreans. As you travel through the country and come to populous villages, you wonder where people get their various wares. Do they make them all themselves? There are very few country shops, and even these are of the most trivial kind. It is when you happen to strike a town on market day that the riddle is solved. For five days the place seems almost deserted, but on the sixth it is simply swarming with humanity. Every farmer and artisan for miles around has foregathered at this point to exchange his wares for those of someone else. All day long it is one scramble to see who can get his business done first, so that an early start can be made for home, or so that there may be leisure to do a little gambling or gossiping. The wine shops are running at full blast, for almost every important bargain is consummated over steaming bowls of rice wine. Every tongue is loosed, and to the uninitiated stranger who approaches one of these commercial orgies for the first time, and when it is at its height, it seems sure that a riot is going on or that a free fight is in hilarious progress. It is like five hundred exciting auction sales going on all at once, or like a busy day on 'change. Of course much money changes hands on these occasions, but comparatively little of it leaves the town. Every man has exchanged his wares for those of another, and everyone wends his way home, happy in the belief that he has made a good bargain. He may have cause to change his mind when the good lady of his house finds what he has bought.

Koreans learn but very slowly to change the style of their

medium of exchange. In the capital anything "goes," but with the people at large the utmost conservatism is the rule. Even to this day the hundreds of Koreans employed at the American gold-mines in Unsan district refuse to touch Japanese paper money, and the company is obliged to send to various ports of the Far East to secure silver Japanese dollars, which have been withdrawn from circulation in Japan itself and are at a considerable discount everywhere. The Korean likes these because the value is intrinsic and does not depend upon any promise, no matter how solvent the government may be that backs the bills. He has had too much to do with governments to accept any such flimsy money as that! An amusing story is told of the unsophisticated Korean of the early eighties. In 1882, when the Japanese legation was burned and all its inmates were killed or else found safety in Chemulpo, one of the fugitives dropped in the street a hand-bag filled with Japanese bills. A Korean picked it up and examined the stuff, but could not imagine why the Japanese should want to carry away those scraps of tough paper. He took them home and papered his wall with them. Some time after this a friend, who had had some dealings with the Japanese at Fusan and knew what was what, happened to call, and he nearly fell in a fit when he saw what was on the wall, but he recovered, and managed to hold his tongue until he had effected the purchase of that house for three hundred dollars. He then tore from the walls upwards of six thousand yen. An even more amusing case was that of the merchant who was on his way up from Fusan with a large amount of paper yen sewed into the lining of his coat. Out jumped a highwayman on him in a lonely spot and demanded his money. He blandly replied that he had none. The robber was disgusted and exclaimed, "Well, then, give me that coat and you take this one." The poor fellow could do no less than comply. A little while after this the same robber held up a gentleman on the same road, and, finding him likewise impecunious, made another exchange of coats, as the gentleman was dressed in silk. The

latter, on his arrival at home, tore off the coat and ordered the women of the house to tear it up for mop-rags, as he would never wear a coat that had been on a robber's back. In about half an hour, as he was seated with his long pipe in his mouth and his favourite book before him on the floor, he heard a most unaccountable disturbance in the women's quarters, and in they rushed upon him screaming that the coat was bewitched with a million imps. The little fat god of wealth that is seated on each of the Japanese bank notes had been too much for their nerves. Fortunately the gentleman had seen Japanese money, and, as he gently disengaged the crisp notes, he murmured to himself the sanctimonious aphorism, "Virtue is its own reward."

CHAPTER XVII

ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING

ONE eminent characteristic of the whole of the Far East is the unsubstantial character of their buildings. Outside of a few pagodas and other monumental buildings we find no remains of ancient edifices, such as excite the admiration and interest of the traveller in western Asia or in Europe. It may be said with reasonable assurance that there are practically no buildings in the Far East, intended for the occupancy of people, that have existed for three centuries without undergoing such radical repairs as to constitute a virtual rebuilding. This is especially true of Korea. The reason is that there is a great disproportion between the weight of the roof and the strength of its supports. The principle of the arch has been known for many centuries, and it has been utilised in the city gates and in a certain number of bridges; but it has not been used in ordinary buildings, however permanent may have been their intended use. The weight of the roof is invariably supported upon wooden pillars, and this, too, in the most primitive manner. Huge beams are laid across from the top of one pillar to the top of another, and from the centres of these beams the roof-tree is supported. There is an utter lack of anything like a strengthening truss to prevent the building from getting out of plumb; and as only that portion of the ground immediately under each of the pillars is specially prepared, to prevent sinking, we see that the enormous weight of the tiled roof rests upon a ludicrously insufficient foundation. It is much like a Chinese lady of, say, one hundred and fifty pounds going about on feet two inches long and one inch wide. This insecurity is increased by the fact that in sinking these slight

foundations the Koreans seldom reach hard-pan, but having gone through the soft upper sediment they pound the earth down with a heavy stone or iron mallet, and without more ado set the heavy foundation stone which is to support the pillar. The impossibility of securing entire uniformity in the solidity of these separate foundations is revealed in about twenty years, when the roof of the building begins to assume a wavy appearance, and everything loses its horizontal or perpendicular position in favour of a certain bibulous obliquity. The first serious repairs, therefore, which a Korean house has to undergo consist in tearing out the flimsy material which fills the wall spaces between the pillars, relieving each pillar in turn of the vertical pressure of the roof by means of improvised struts, and then shifting the position of the foundation stone so as to allow the pillar to be made perpendicular once more. The Orientals seem never to have acquired the notion of a tie-beam so arranged as to relieve the lateral thrust caused by a roof resting upon rafters. By far the greater part of the weight of the roof rests directly upon the centre of the tie-beam. The result is that this beam has to be of enormous thickness. The only thing that prevents the building from leaning is the mortise of the tie-beam into the top of the supporting pillar. There are no trusses to prevent leaning, and so it takes but a few years for the building to get out of plumb. It is doubtless this which makes Koreans prefer to have their houses all together in a bunch. They resemble a company of jolly roisterers trying to get home in the "wee sma' hours" with arms interlocked for mutual support. If you buy a Korean house in a crowded quarter and want to tear it down, you are likely to arouse shrill protests from your neighbours on either side. You will not go far along any street in Seoul or any other Korean town without seeing houses propped up with stout sticks for fear they will fall over into the ditch. On the whole, one has to conclude that the roof is considered the main thing, and the foundation only a side issue. All Korean houses, whether those of the common people or the palaces of kings, are built upon

one and the same plan. The only difference is in degree. The basis of the structure is what is called the *kan*. This means a space about eight feet square. If you wish to buy a house, the first question will be as to how many *kan* you require. The price is stated in terms of the *kan*, and you will buy the building just as you would buy silk by the yard or beef by the pound. Of course the condition of the building will be taken into consideration in estimating the value, but the price of tiled house or thatched house at any time is readily found in the market quotations as so much per *kan*. Some years ago there was far greater uniformity in price than now, for in the eighties Koreans did not realise that a house on the main street was of any more value than one on a side lane; nor did the amount of land about the house figure at all in the price. I have more than once bought a small thatched house in the middle of a large field in Seoul, paying only the market price per *kan* of house. Those days have gone now, and the situation and the area of the land are carefully taken into account. All Korean houses being built on a single pattern, a description of one will suffice for all. After the site has been plotted out with cord and the position of each post decided upon, holes are dug at each of these points to a depth of four or five feet, until something like solid earth has been reached. Then a number of workmen stand around one of these holes, holding in their hands ropes attached to a large stone or, preferably, a heavy lump of iron. As the foreman sings a droning labour song, the men pull simultaneously at the ropes, and the stone or iron is heaved high in the air and falls into the hole, thus tamping down the earth at the point where the foundation stone is to lie. Crushed stone or broken pieces of tile are thrown in and this is all mashed into the earth to make the foundation still stronger. Each hole is treated likewise, and then the *chuchutol*, or post stones, are placed in position. They may protrude a foot or more from the surface of the ground. Usually they are too small to reach the bottom of the hole, and in that case loose stones are piled in until the proper level is reached.

These post stones are always placed about eight feet apart. The posts, eight feet in height, are erected upon the stones, the bottom of each being cut with a small adze, so as to fit the irregularities of the stone as well as possible. The top of each post has a deep mortise or notch into which the heavy cross-beams are fitted and driven down with mallets. It is evident that three beams have to be fitted to the top of each post excepting in the case of the corner posts. This requires the cutting down of the ends of the supported beams to such an extent that not more than a quarter of their cross section is presented at the point of support. After all the posts and cross beams have been put in place, heavy uprights are erected from the centres of these beams, and on these rest the roof-tree. The rafters, simply round sticks of varying size, are nailed to this roof-tree and extend about two feet beyond the wall of the house on either side. They are always arranged so that there shall be a slight dip to the roof when it is completed. This is the curve characteristic of all roofs of the Far East. After this the whole roof is covered thickly with fagots, laid roughly on and tied down with straw rope, and this is covered two or three inches deep with ordinary earth, on which the heavy tiles are laid. The latter are set without mortar or plaster of any kind, and their weight alone is guarantee of their stability. The broad, slightly curved "female" tile are laid first with the concave side upward, and then the interstitial lines are covered with the narrower and more sharply curved "male" tiles with the convex side upward. Each of these is set in ordinary mud, but without plaster. It must be confessed that it makes a very thorough roof. It is impervious to heat, and no ordinary storm will beat through the crevices of it. There are two drawbacks. The weight is out of all proportion to the rest of the house, and the constant strain is sure to make the structure "lie down" sooner or later. Then, again, the mud in which the "male" tiles are set is full of seeds of all kinds, and during the rainy season in summer the roof is sure to become a veritable garden of weeds. They say that the tiles have to be

A CORNER GROCERY

Dried cuttlefish (white) hanging on the wall, with dried oysters and clams; on the ground dried jujubes, persimmons, chestnuts, ginger, and other delicacies

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reset each year for two or three years before the seeds get killed out, but no new mud must be added, or it will all have to be done over again.

Meanwhile the window and door frames have been put up, and the mural spaces have been filled in with a strong wattle, upon which clay mud is plastered. After this mud has dried and is seamed in every direction with cracks, a kind of plaster is applied which is made of a mixture of fine loamy earth, sand and horse-manure, the last ingredient taking the place of hair. The inside and outside are made the same, for the overhanging eaves are supposed to keep the weather from the outer walls. When this is covered with the strong, fibrous Korean paper, it makes a very thorough and durable wall.

The floor is an important matter, as it is both floor and stove. From the level of the ground up to the level of the floor they build with mud and stone, making, as it were, three or four ditches, which converge into one at each end of the room. The whole floor is then covered with large slabs of stone about two inches thick. The joints are carefully sealed with cement so that no smoke can come through into the room. Over the stones a thin layer of cement is spread, and then the whole is covered with a heavy oiled paper which under the tread of stockinged feet soon wears as smooth as silk. The opening to the fireplace is outside the room, and above it is generally set the great kettle for boiling the family rice. This is the kitchen, and it is simply the dirt floor, with whatever benches, shelves and implements are necessary. A room heated this way is called a *pang*, and it differs from the Chinese *kang* in no essential particular except that the latter occupies only part of the room and is raised above the floor like a divan, while the Korean forms the whole of the floor itself. A small house will contain only one room like this, with a kitchen attached and one or two storerooms; but a large gentleman's establishment, while built in the same general way, will contain perhaps a dozen or more such rooms and a long row of servants' quarters, making in all as many as a hundred and

fifty or even two hundred *kan*. Every dwelling with any pretension to comfort will have a separate part called the *sarang*. This is the gentleman's reception-room, and is approached from the outside without coming near the women's part of the house. This latter is called the "inner room," and no one of the male sex will enter there without the express invitation of and in company with the master of the house.

The Koreans have a passion for cutting up their compounds with endless walls, making a veritable labyrinth of the place. To our eyes this is a great blemish, for it leaves little opportunity for a pleasing effect on the eye. The very finest Korean house is the most secluded, and you can discover its charms only by close inspection, and by twisting in and out through numberless gates and alleys. You cannot stand off and admire it as you can a European building. On the street side it presents nothing to the eye but a plain row of ordinary Korean *kan* without anything to show its character whatever. Judging from their houses, the Koreans do not put their best side out. You cross the cesspool to get into the gate; you go through the servants' quarters and stables to get to the apartments of the master of the house. At the very back of all, and most inaccessible, you may find a pretty bank with some flowering shrubs, some quaint water-worn stones, and perhaps a solemn stork or two. In none of the various enclosures will you find a blade of grass growing. Such a thing as a lawn is quite unknown, and if grass tries to sprout it will be immediately scraped away with a hoe. In a very nice house you may find a few potted plants or shrubs in the enclosure before the *sarang*.

The ideal house site will face the south and will have a steep bank behind it. The south means warmth, light and life. The north means blackness, cold and death. This is an idea that has been borrowed from China, and is not indigenous with the Koreans. The same is true of every grave site and of every prefectural town site as well. Other things being equal, the southern exposure will always commend itself to the Korean.

HOW THEY SHOVEL DIRT

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As to the sanitary arrangements of the Korean house, the less said the better. These people have not learned the first rudiments of hygiene, and so long as there is a ditch that will carry off the water that falls from the sky, all requirements seem to be met. The scavenger comes around at any time of day to take away the night soil, and you are more than likely to pass him and his load as you enter the gentleman's compound. To the Westerner this insensibility of the Korean, and of all the dwellers of the Far East without exception, is entirely unaccountable. You will find the most horribly offensive conditions as readily among the residences of the wealthy and powerful as among the poor. There is this much to be said, however, before leaving this rather unpleasant subject: the open sewerage of Korea, while offensive to the eye, is far less so to the nose than that of China, and even many portions of Japan. There are much fewer epidemics of cholera in Korea than in Japan, while diphtheria, that special disease resulting from imperfect sewerage, is far more common in Tokyo than in Seoul. What I would maintain is that in spite of the offensiveness of the sanitation of Seoul, both to the eye and the nose, there is little evidence to prove that the actual health conditions among the natives are any worse than among the Japanese or Chinese.

The Koreans seem to have but a vague idea of what a street is really for, and of the restrictions which communal ownership should place upon its use. It is only since the coming of foreigners that the streets of Seoul have assumed anything like a semblance of order. Up to that time even the broad street which forms the central artery of the city was so choked up with booths and stalls that two carts could hardly pass each other at certain points. The Korean shopkeeper thinks nothing of extending his establishment out into the street for a distance of two, three or even four feet. At first he does it only as a temporary booth or screen for his goods, but as soon as the public get used to going around the obstruction he will quietly plant permanent posts at the limits of his encroachment, and the thing is done. If expos-

tulated with, he will put on a look of injured innocence, and assert that he has been using the space for many years, in fact, since his father's time, and has a right to it. Not once but many times have I been obliged to nip this thing in the bud on streets leading to my own house. The little awning appears, and you bend aside to pass it, but if you are wise you will stop and see that it is removed ere it is too late. The street is also the depository of any and every kind of filth. Sooner or later it is trampled down by the hoofs of passing horses and is lost to sight; but if it were not for the great army of scavenger hawks that keep eternal watch for tempting morsels, and that other army, of anæmic dogs, who live on the border line of famine, I do not know what would become of the people of any Korean town. If a Korean wants some dirt to make mud with which to plaster a wall or mend a smoke-flue, he simply goes out into the middle of the street and digs as much as he wants. No care is taken to fill up the hole, and time only accomplishes the feat. Scores of times I have come upon places where a hole had been dug in the street large enough to bury an ox. The people who took the soil away may obligingly deposit the sweepings of their yards there as a pretence to remove the serious obstruction, but it is mere pretence. So long as the vandal leaves a narrow path by which people can pass, there is likely to be no complaint at all. The principle seems to be that what belongs to nobody in particular is lawful loot for anybody.

No Korean house, however humble, is complete unless it is surrounded by a wall or a fence of some kind that cannot be seen through. The reason is twofold. It is necessary to screen the women from observation. This is the prime reason; and it is considered a serious misdemeanour to look over a wall or fence into your neighbour's yard. If it is necessary to mount the roof of a house for any purpose, it is obligatory upon the occupants of the house to give notice to all the neighbours, so that the women may get under cover and escape observation. The climbing of a wall is the act of a thief, and you will see Koreans

BUILDING A DIRT WALL

going a long way around to enter the gate, even when there is a breach in the wall quite sufficient to give easy access. But, on the other hand, the Korean has no respect whatever for a fence which he can see through. He will climb over or through and consider it no trespass at all. Before many weeks have passed the pickets will begin to disappear, and someone will be the richer by so much firewood. It is only the wall or fence that is impervious to sight that impresses the native of this country. The ordinary walls are made of dirt packed down tightly between parallel boards by a process quite unique, and to be described only by an illustration. The wall is about eighteen inches thick and is covered with tiles. The sides are scraped smooth, and after they have dried they are covered with lime plaster. If well made and with sufficient foundation, such a wall will last for many years. Where the red disintegrated granite is available the wall can be made so solid that even after the tiles have been removed it will stand for years.

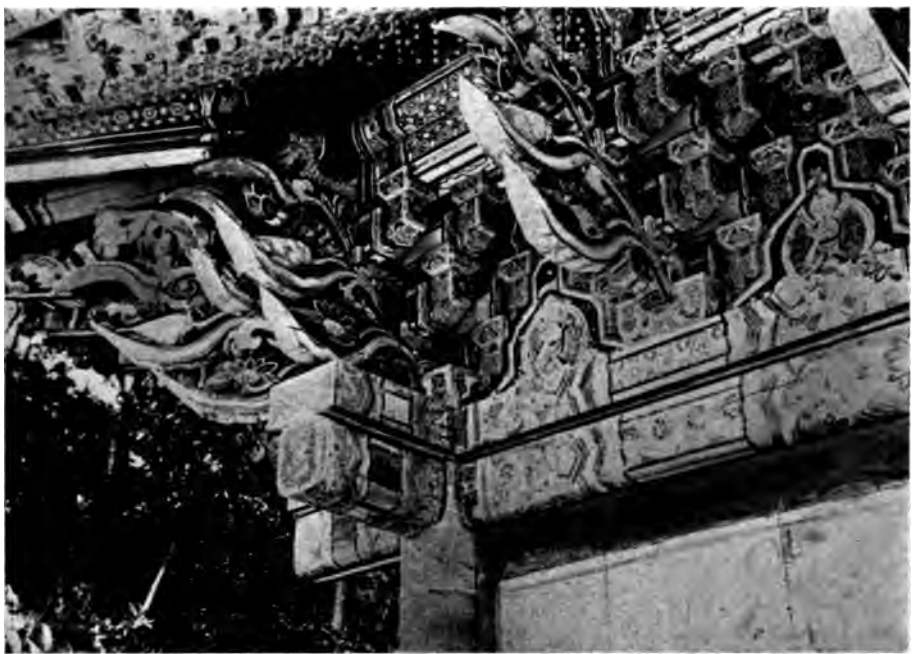
The Koreans have no notion of public parks or other places of public ornament or recreation, and yet they are passionately fond of wandering about the hills finding picturesque nooks and enjoying the beauties of nature. In many of these retreats there are semi-public houses of diversion, which include a considerable area of land enclosed by a wall. These places belong to the government, and can be used only by application to the proper office. School picnics or other similar entertainments are held in these pretty retreats during the proper season, but it is only the upper classes that have access to them at any time. Their only attractions are a rocky gorge, a little pond and a summer pavilion ten feet square. In country districts the monasteries form the public parks. These are always beautifully situated, and are surrounded with trees. Here the people will congregate and have a grand picnic, generally in connection with some national festival. But besides this, there is in almost every village some large tree beneath which the people meet to talk and gossip. It is the village *agora*. The old men bring out

their chess boards and play, and the leaders of the village talk over the communal affairs. If there is any gossip going, you will be sure to hear it at this point. Not uncommonly the village shrine is the place of general rendezvous.

Without doubt the city walls are the most imposing structures in Korea. The enormous work represented by the wall which surrounds Seoul is at once apparent, and is very impressive. As you pass through the country you will frequently see the top of some rocky hill crowned with a genuine acropolis. It is a heavy stone wall twelve or fifteen feet high and a mile or more around. Within you will find no evidences of life nor of recent occupation. Long centuries ago the usefulness of these places of refuge passed away, and they remain, like the feudal castles of Europe, mere monuments of past events. They never were places of permanent residence, but were used, like the block-houses in western America, when there was danger of an Indian raid.

A word is in place regarding architectural decorations. These do not consist, as in the West, in variations of general style. The Koreans adhere strictly to one plan, and their forms of ornamentation are wholly superficial. Only government buildings can be painted. A private citizen would be arrested and punished severely if he presumed to paint his house. It would imply an assumption of royal privilege. The same would happen if he should leave the posts of his house round instead of squaring them. This also is a royal prerogative.

It is not easy to describe the paint on a Korean palace. If the reader will imagine that a rainbow has been dashed against the house and that fragments of it have adhered to every exposed piece of wood he will gain a faint idea of how it looks. The colours are the primitive hues of the rainbow, and they are applied in little curved rainbow patterns, so that any painted surface looks like a conglomerate of kaleidoscopic fragments. It tires the imagination to fancy how the painter could do the same thing twice, but we find that he can do nothing else.



ART AND RELIGION

(*a*) Under the eaves of an audience hall
(*b*) A Buddhist Holy of Holies

Everywhere we find the same heterogeneous consistency. On the yamen gates we frequently find the great circle made by putting together two huge commas. This is called the *tăgeuk*, and is the emblem seen on the Korean flag. It is supposed to represent the male and female properties in nature.

Wood carving plays some part in the ornamentation of public buildings, though here again the private citizen is debarred. The latticed windows sometimes consist of an elaborate filigree, but, as ordinary pine wood is always used, no very fine effects are possible. One of the most characteristic forms of wood carving is seen in the multiplicity of horns that protrude from the ends of the beams beneath the eaves of audience halls and other ceremonial buildings. To save these from the contamination of innumerable sparrows, a wire net is commonly drawn about the building just beneath the eaves. Not infrequently a curious addition is made by hanging from the corners of eaves a large number of small pieces of broken window-glass. Each piece is suspended from a separate string, and they all hang in a bunch so that the least breath of wind makes them strike together and produce a soft and pleasant tinkle. Each piece of glass is painted in colours.

Among the most conspicuous objects in Korea are the earthenware "monkeys" which stand in rows along the sloping corners of the city gates and government buildings. These nondescript figures do not represent monkeys, but they are so called by foreigners because they bear some resemblance to that animal. Nor are they placed upon the gates by way of ornament. The vivid imagination of the Korean peoples heaven and earth with all sorts of demons, and these "monkeys" are placed on the gates in order to frighten away these evil influences. This is the most pointed, if not the only, reference which the government, as such, makes to the native spirit worship. In every other respect the Confucian system is adhered to.

CHAPTER XVIII

TRANSPORTATION

THE condition of any people can be fairly estimated by the facilities they enjoy for intercommunication. Judged by this standard, the Koreans must be set down as among the least favoured of peoples. Throughout most of the country the roads are simply bridle-paths of the roughest description, over which it would be almost impossible for a *jinrikisha* to pass, to say nothing of a carriage or a cart. There are a few localities where carts can be used within a limited radius, but these are so few compared with the whole extent of the country that they merely form an exception to the rule. On the great road between Seoul and the Chinese border or between Seoul and a few of the more important provincial centres there may be an occasional and spasmodic attempt at repairs, but it is only when the roads become almost entirely impassable, and some disgusted official makes a momentary stir over the matter in Seoul, that a few hundred dollars may be given for repairs. Of this sum three-fourths goes into someone's pockets and the rest into the repairs. This sort of thing is always looked upon as more or less of a joke, and, when repairs are in progress, the country people wink at each other and ask which official it is now that has been stuck in the mud. On ordinary roads there are frequent places where nothing wider than a bicycle could pass on wheels, and even this ubiquitous vehicle has to be picked up bodily and carried over rough places every few miles. The constant shuffling of feet along these narrow paths through so many centuries has worn the road down below the level of the ground, especially where it passes over hills, for here the wind has full play and sweeps

away the pulverised earth. In the valleys the roads lie along the tops of the banks that separate the rice-fields, and so are sure to be kept from being entirely destroyed. Even between important towns the path is sometimes just a foot-wide path along the top of a rice-field bank, and it taxes the imagination to believe that such a wretched thoroughfare is all that connects two important centres. I shall never forget the curious sensation with which I passed over the road between Chemulpo and Seoul for the first time. It made me think of the sheep-paths on the old farm up in Vermont, and if it had not been for the most positive statements of my guide I should have refused to believe that it could lead to the metropolis of a kingdom of over ten million people.

Near the great centres there are a few substantial stone bridges, but for the most part the country is without permanent bridges. There is a brilliant exception to this in the celebrated *Mansekyo,* or "Ten-thousand Year Bridge," at Hamheung. It is almost half a mile long and is built upon natural forked timbers sunk in the sand. In the crotches of these lie the cross-pieces. The floor of the bridge is made of timbers about the size of railroad sleepers, tied together with the tough vine which the Koreans call *chik.* Like the old-time London Bridge, it usually has many houses built upon it, but when the rainy season comes on these are hastily removed, for more than once a sudden storm among the mountains has swollen the stream so rapidly that the bridge has been partially swept away before the sleepers were aware of their danger. Almost every year sees portions of it swept away, and, as the cost of its repair is a charge upon the government, and the contract nets the carpenters a round sum, it is looked upon as one of the "good things" of the season. It was this bridge that the Russians fired in May of 1904.

The streams are crossed in three ways: by ferry, by ford and by little temporary bridges, which are not expected to survive the rains of the summer season. All streams whose per-

manent depth is greater than a man's height are crossed by ferry. These ferries are supposed to be government affairs, and are supported out of the finances of the district in which they are situated, but the passenger is always supposed to pay a small sum as a gratuity. I imagine that the ferryman has to depend largely upon this source of income. The ferryboats are wide, shallow affairs, and when they are loaded down with a miscellaneous crowd of loaded bullocks and pack-ponies, gentlemen's "chairs," coolies' *jiggys* and a score or more of men, women and children, it generally seems as if it was only by a special dispensation of Providence that the opposite bank could ever be reached. Indeed, an annual sacrifice is made to the spirits of those who have been drowned in this and in other ways.

The little temporary bridges built on small sticks, covered with brushwood and earth on top of all, are one of the curiosities of Korea. They are barely wide enough for a single animal or person to pass, and they usually have one or more holes through which the unwary may put his foot. The Korean word for bridge is the same as that for leg, and the reason for this is plain. The bridge is simply a row of artificial legs let down into the sand. Time was when the Koreans were capable of better things, for during the Japanese invasion of 1592, when the Chinese army came to help the Koreans and arrived at the bank of the Imjin River, the Chinese general refused to take his men across unless the Koreans would build a substantial bridge. The distance was fully one hundred yards, but the Koreans, in their thirst for revenge upon the Japanese, were equal to any task. On one side was a heavily wooded bluff and on the other a sandy shore. On the low bank they sunk great posts, and between these and the trees on the opposite side they carried eight great hawsers of the tough *chik* vine, some eight inches in diameter. These dragged in the water in mid-stream; but, going out in boats, they put stout bars of oak between the hawsers and twisted them until they were brought well above

the surface. On these hawsers brushwood was piled and on the brushwood clay. This was trampled down firmly, and the armies crossed upon it in comfort and safety. So far as we are aware, this was the first great suspension bridge mentioned in history. The frail rope-bridges of the Andes may antedate this, but they are of quite a different order of structure.

Korean tradition tells of one other way by which a river has been crossed, but we would hardly classify it among the regular methods. The story goes that a certain prince was banished to a distant locality and held in durance on an island in a river. One of the officials who was loyal to him followed him and took up his residence in a neighbouring town. He greatly desired to carry some food to the prince, but there was no way to cross the stream. He sat down beside it and waited, and presently the water divided, like the waters of the Red Sea, and he passed across dry-shod to the prince.

Such being the very backward condition of all roads in Korea, we are not surprised to learn that during the heavy rains of summer, when the temporary bridges are all down and small streams have become roaring torrents, travel and traffic are practically suspended, excepting in the case of that which goes by way of junk. At this season the Korean moves about but little. It is his lazy time, unless he is a farmer and has to look after the transplanting of his rice. Ordinarily he will stay at home and consume an indefinite number of melons, seeds and all.

With the exception of the railway lines from Seoul to Fusan and Chemulpo respectively, and the various Japanese steamship companies, the methods of transportation in Korea are still the primitive ones, and all but a small fraction of the carrying is done as it has been all through the centuries. These methods correspond precisely with the character of the roads, which, as we have seen, are mere bridle or foot paths.

First in importance comes the famous Korean bullock. He means more to the Korean than the horse does to the Arab or

the llama to the Peruvian. Not once but many times a sweeping scourge has killed off a large fraction of the cattle in one section or other of Korea, and in each instance it has precipitated a famine. The heavy mud of the rice-fields cannot be cultivated without this animal, and in case of his death the farmer simply lets his field lie fallow. Korea can boast of a sturdy, patient and tractable breed of cattle. These bullocks which wind in and out among the hills of this country, carrying every sort of produce, are not the fierce and rampageous animals that are supposed in our own land to accept every challenge of a red rag. They are docility itself. This heavy, slow-plodding animal, docile, long-suffering, uncomplaining, would make a fitting emblem of the Korean people. How often have we seen a brutal, drunken bullock-driver vent his spleen on someone else by beating his animal with a club or violently jerk the rope tied to the wooden ring that passes through the cartilage of its nose. But the patient bullock never remonstrates or attempts to defend itself. Just so through the long centuries have the Korean people borne the burdens of their rulers and taken their blows without complaint, until at last patience has become a second nature, and the Western on-looker marvels at the amount of oppression that the ordinary Korean will endure without revolt. The bullock could turn and rend his master with utmost ease, even as the people could relieve themselves of oppression, but the patience of the Korean has reached a point where it ceases to be a virtue.

Next in importance comes the Korean pony. Nowhere else in Asia is this diminutive creature matched. The only thing like him is the Shetland pony, but, while the latter is a stocky and shaggy beast, proportioned very differently from the ordinary horse, the Korean animal is simply a miniature of the larger breed, and his proportions are often as perfect as are found in the best of our own boasted horses. History and tradition have much to say about this breed of horse. As far back as ancient Yemak, which flourished at the beginning of our era,

we read that the horses were so small that men could ride under the branches of the fruit trees without striking their heads against them. From time immemorial the island of Quelpart has been the famous breeding-place of the hardy pony, and the Mongols established themselves there very strongly in order to breed horses for use in their wars. But for all this the Koreans seem to have developed no love for the horse such as redeems the character of the Bedouin. The Koreans never mutilate their animals, and the result is that, though the bulls are almost as quiet and docile as the oxen of the West, the little stallions are inveterate fighters. Even when tied head to tail in a long line they are almost sure to get tangled up in a squealing mêlée unless their drivers are at hand. I shall not soon forget the occasion on which the beast I was riding succeeded in getting both his forelegs over the neck of my wife's mount and proceeded to chew its ears off. It was a novel and exciting tête-à-tête.

But besides the bullock and the horse there is another "beast of burden" in Korea that outranks them both, and that is man. One could not safely quote figures here, but my impression is that more dead weight is carried on men's backs than on those of bullocks and horses combined. As a rule, it is only the large through traffic that is carried on animals' backs, and even this is often seen on men's backs. The dried fish from the northeast all come around by boat or across by pack-horse. Brushwood, grass and fagots are brought into the large centres on bullocks, horses and men's backs. Americans who are expert in throwing the "diamond hitch" have confessed that the Koreans can beat them at the game. Who can wonder, since the Koreans have been learning for the last four thousand years — a pretty thorough apprenticeship! Not only are these people experts in adapting a load to an animal's back, but they have solved the problem of how to distribute the weight of a load on a man's back so that he can carry the maximum weight with the minimum of fatigue. It is safe to say that the Korean *jiggy,* or carrying-frame, is almost

ideal in its construction. It is so built that the weight is nicely poised, and is so distributed upon the hips, the back and the shoulders that each part bears its proportionate burden. The result is that a man can carry any load that his legs will enable him to support. This *jiggy* is a unique national institution; as much so as the samovar is of Russia, or the bull-fight is of Spain. Compare it with the methods in vogue in other lands. The Chinese balance their burden in two baskets attached to a bamboo stick. This is carried over the shoulder. The stick has to be long enough so that the swinging baskets will not strike his legs as he walks, and the weight is so applied to his body that only a small part of his strength can be brought into play. When his burden cannot be divided, he has to carry a counterbalancing weight in one basket. He requires almost three times as much room in the street as the Korean carrier. The Korean sets his *jiggy* on the ground, and props it up with his forked stick. Placing the load on the frame, he ties it there securely with a cord that forms an essential part of the apparatus. Kneeling down, he inserts his arms into the two padded loops and fits them on his shoulders. Then leaning forward, he throws the weight of the load upon his back, and by the aid of the stick rises to a standing posture. He can easily rise with a weight of two hundred and fifty pounds, but if it is three hundred pounds or more, he requires the help of another man to rise. I have seen Korean coolies carry a weight of four hundred pounds in this way a distance of several hundred yards without resting. Of course such a thing would be entirely beyond the power of a Chinese coolie with his bamboo stick. Either the stick or his shoulder must break. The average load that a Korean will carry at the rate of thirty miles a day is about one hundred pounds. The pack-ponies carry about twice as much, and the bullocks from three to four times as much.

Besides these, there are several special methods of transportation confined to particular kinds of burdens. Heavy stones are carried on carts if there is a road, and if it be in a part of the

WATER-CARRIERS AT A NEIGHBOURHOOD WELL

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country where carts are used; but for short distances this is usually accomplished by means of a long, heavy pole or beam resting on the shoulders of many men. This piece of wood is fifteen feet long, six inches in thickness at the middle, and three at the ends. The stone is attached to it by heavy ropes, and four, six or eight men put their shoulders to the carrying beam at each end. They stand so close together that their bodies actually touch each other, and it would be impossible to walk if they did not keep exact step, like a line of prisoners at Sing-sing. The knack of doing this is acquired, and there is a distinct class of workmen who receive special wages for it.

One of the most conspicuous occupations of Korea is that of water-carrier. In the rural districts the women of the house generally carry the water from the spring or well to the house in jars on their heads, but in the large towns this work is done by a special class of men. Seoul is supplied with water only by the miserable neighbourhood wells, about which the less said the better. The people do not hesitate to wash their soiled clothes immediately beside the well, where the filth is readily washed back into it, and vegetables or other things are generally cleaned beside the well-curb. These wells are often very far from sanitary, and it is to them that we must trace the terrible results of occasional cholera epidemics and other infectious diseases. To supply a large city with water from this source is a work of no small magnitude, and the water-carrier is a recognised institution, which boasts of a powerful guild. The work is genuine and hard, and the pay is correspondingly high. This high pay puts a premium upon the work. The applicant for a position as a water-carrier in any thickly populated portion of Seoul will have to pay from forty to one hundred dollars for the position. Each house to which water is carried pays a monthly fee for the service. The water is carried in two wooden buckets the size and shape of an inverted firkin, suspended from a yoke which rests upon the small of the back and is held in place by straps over the shoulders. The buckets are fastened to the yoke

by bamboo fibres, and the peculiar gait affected by the carrier swings the buckets just enough to make the fastenings rub together and send forth a strident squeak which, like the horrible yell of the axles of Chinese barrows, warns people to make way for the water-carrier.

In carrying ordinary small packages the Koreans do not wrap them up in paper and tie them with a string as we do. Paper is far too valuable and string is too rare to make this possible; but the article to be carried is placed on a square cloth, and the corners brought up over it and knotted. In going to the market in the morning the Korean will take a long, narrow cloth bag, open at both ends, and into this he will pour his various purchases, perhaps making a knot in the bag to keep them separate. Then he ties the two ends of the bag together, and swings this completed circle over his shoulder and goes home. His method of carrying his long, "bologna-sausage" strings of cash is most peculiar. He inserts the end of the long string beneath the cord which forms his waistband, and which precariously supports his nether garments, and, bringing the other end about his waist, he twists it again through the waist-cord. One would think this a most clumsy and uncomfortable way to carry it, but one good object at least is conserved; that is, the money is effectually concealed beneath his flowing robes, and its existence is unguessed until he chooses to disclose it. To the Westerner this precaution may seem unnecessary, but in the Orient, at least in Korea, people studiously avoid the display of wealth unless they have the influence necessary to protect it from spoliation.

The subject of transportation would be but half covered if we omitted the boats of Korea. From the earliest times these people have been large users of this method of carrying. The mountainous character of the country, the miserable roads and the many possibilities of interference on the highway have driven them to the water-ways. But the high tides and the consequent strong currents on the western coast have also *invited* them to the water-ways. Our notion of the coast is anything but invit-

THE SHIPYARD

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ing; but when we remember that the fringing islands protect the junk routes from high seas, and that the sweeping currents carry the boatman in his desired direction at least ten hours out of the twenty-four, however the wind may sit, and when we further note that the junks are so constructed that they can ground without danger, and that to be stuck on a mud-bank only means a chance for so many more pipes of tobacco, we can but wonder that *all* the traffic does not go by sea.

The ordinary junk is inferior in shape and general construction to either the Japanese or Chinese craft. The cause of this is the fact that the Koreans have never attempted much on the open seas, but have confined themselves mostly to coastwise traffic; and even this has been for the most part among islands where there are harbours of one sort or another within a few hours' run of any particular point. In the matter of sailing against the wind the Korean craft is superior to either of the others, because it does not stand nearly so far out of the water, and yet the Koreans cannot be said to know how to tack. In fact, the Korean junk is merely a larger edition of the ordinary river boat. It is flat of bottom, square of end, and the bottom curves up at each end so that it looks something like a huge punt. It has two masts which stand at different angles, and give the boat a general air of having indulged in late hours. The sails are of the "square" variety, simple, oblong pieces of rough cloth fastened to stout poles or "spars" at each end. A rope is knotted around the middle of one of these sticks, and the sail is hauled up to the top of the mast. Ropes from the two ends of the bottom stick form the "sheet." It is evident that such a primitive apparatus would not allow of sailing very close to the wind. The best that can be said of it is that it helps to counteract the retarding action of the wind when the mariner wishes to go with the tide. But even so it has been the universal experience of foreigners that the junk-men prefer to anchor unless the wind is with them. The junk can make little headway against a four-knot tide. It is the same with their financial

transactions as with their boats. They must have both capital and "pull" to secure a profitable "rake-off." However much capital they may have, if it is necessary to sail against the tide of influence, they are almost sure to make shipwreck.

Innumerable river craft bring the produce of the country down to the sea, the junks take it coast-wise to the mouths of other rivers, and then river boats carry it inland again to its destination. A few of the rivers are deep enough to float junks that are safe at sea, and so some of the cargoes do not have to be broken out *en route*. Rice, barley, beans, fish and edible sea-weed are the usual cargoes, but all sorts of produce go to make up the total. Now that the government has changed its system of taxation and takes money instead of rice, and since the opening up of regular steamship lines and railways, the traffic by junk has shrunken to comparatively small dimensions. It is said that the river traffic on the Naktong River inland from Fusan has been ruined by the Seoul-Fusan Railway, which parallels the river. The railway is cheaper, swifter and safer in every way, and the temporary dislocation in industrial conditions will finally result in much good to the Korean people.

There are many kinds and names of boats in Korea, but the general pattern is the same. On the eastern coast, however, there is one style of craft that differs radically from the ordinary. If you should take two ordinary "dug-outs," tip them up on edge with their prows touching and their sterns five feet apart, and then nail planks across from the lower inner side of one to the corresponding side of the other, and complete it with a stern, you would come near this clumsy but withal effective craft. It would be dangerous but for a sort of gunwale running around the top to keep out the seas. One of the most curious sights in Korea is that of a loaded wood-boat on the Tadong River, running by Pyeng-yang. In order to save cargo space for the light brushwood, which is enormously bulky for its weight, the entire boat from stem to stern is piled ten feet high with the fuel, excepting a tiny space just at the prow, where two men sit and

row. From the very centre of the boat there rises a stout mast which protrudes a foot or so above the load, and on a little platform on the tip-top of this mast sits the steersman, holding in his hand the end of an enormously long sweep which reaches into the water at the stern. The whole thing looks ludicrous enough even when the craft is loaded; but when there is no load, the sight of two men rowing in the very prow, while the steersman sits perched upon the very top of the mast like Stylites on his pillar, with a twenty-foot tiller in his hand, is extremely grotesque.

The Koreans are great travellers within the confines of their own little country. I doubt if there are many lands where a higher estimate is placed upon the pleasure of travel. The Koreans do not rush from place to place ferreting out the notable objects of interest, but they wander about in a dreamy way, enjoying natural scenery in a wholly natural manner. Besides this there is the usual amount of travelling on official business and for commercial purposes. One wishes to know how the people get about in the absence of carriages or other vehicles.

Officials always travel by "chair." This consists of a little four-posted canopy about three feet square by four feet high, carried on two poles. The passenger sits on the floor of the "chair," and there are curtains to let down on all four sides so as to screen him entirely from view. Each of the two carriers has a pair of suspenders over his shoulders, and through the loops of these on either side of his body the ends of the poles pass. It is not an uncomfortable way to travel if one can sit cross-legged like a Turk for ten hours a day. There is very little jarring if the carriers break step as they should. There is no beast of burden whose footfall is so soft as that of a man. These "chairs" are of all degrees of elegance, just as our own carriages are. Those that are used by women are of course always closed, unless it chances to be a dancing girl. Women's chairs are distinguished by fan-shaped bangles hanging in rows on the sides. These chairs are on hire at regular stands throughout all the

larger cities, but in the country they are more difficult to obtain. Most well-to-do gentlemen keep their own private chairs. In travelling long distances you pay each carrier a stated sum for each ten *li* of the road. The four-man chairs are used only by the highest officials. No one of lesser degree than a cabinet minister is allowed to use them. They are much like the two-man chair, but the poles are longer, and the cords that hold the poles at either end are attached to a short stick that rests upon the shoulders of the two bearers. I have never found a method of conveyance more smooth or delightful than this four-man chair. The coolies do not keep step, and so the motion is perfectly even. The elasticity of the poles add to this effect, and no railway car was ever built luxuriously enough nor were rails ever laid true enough to equal this delightful motion. In no department of Korean life is the wonderful endurance of the Korean more fully illustrated than in the carrying of these chairs. If you were in a hurry to go overland from Seoul to Pyeng-yang, a distance of about one hundred and sixty miles, you would naturally suppose that a good horse would take you there in the quickest time, but there is probably no horse in Korea that would get you to your destination so quickly as the chair coolie. Take eight men and pay them well and you will enter Pyeng-yang about noon of the third day out from Seoul. They will take you four miles an hour, sixteen hours a day. The amount of rice they will consume *en route* is enormous, and they will sleep for twenty-four hours after reaching the end of the journey.

Another way of travelling is by horseback or donkey-back. Though the Korean horse is very small, no Korean would think of riding it and sending his baggage by some other conveyance. Two stout baskets or boxes containing the rider's effects are slung over the back of the horse and rest against his sides. On top of this the traveller's blankets and other bedding are smoothly laid. Then a sort of frame, like the back of a chair but only eight inches high, is placed on top of all, and there the man sits cross-legged or with his feet hanging down. You stand aghast at the

TWO INDUSTRIES OF KOREA

(*a*) A hat-mender (*b*) Making "ironing" sticks

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manifest cruelty of it, and you wish that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals might take him in hand; but if you were to try it yourself, and should find that the hardy little pony is ready to carry you thirty miles a day as long as you wish to go, and that, too, without any visible evidences of over-fatigue, you would change your mind. It is true, however, that the Koreans do treat their horses with great cruelty. They cherish no sentimental ideas about the animal; and whether he be lame or spavined or otherwise incapable, he is given the usual load, and driven until there is absolutely no more to be gotten out of him. The Korean donkey is a very tiny animal, with a hoof that would go into a teacup. The rider's feet almost touch the ground. There can be but a very few pounds' difference between the weight of the animal and its load. In this case the servant usually carries the baggage on his back and trots along behind his master.

But, for all these different aids to travel, it must be said that by far the greatest part of it is done on foot. The Korean is a magnificent walker. Every foreigner who has visited this country has been struck at once by the erect carriage, the springy gait and the graceful action of the Korean in walking. In this he forms a striking contrast to almost every other denizen of the Far East. He can easily cover his thirty miles a day, and this is all he could do if he had a mount. He has no expense except for his three bowls of rice a day, and an occasional new pair of straw shoes. Thirty miles is his regular rate for long distances, but if necessary he can, and often does, cover his fifty miles a day. Most Koreans who travel for mere pleasure prefer to go afoot. Whether they get more pleasure out of it than we do out of our bicycles, automobiles and other mile-eaters is, of course, a question; but it is a question to which they, at least, would reply in the affirmative without hesitation.

There are so many islands off the coast that the passenger traffic by boat is very considerable, but people who live on the mainland seldom patronise the junks, for it is generally found

that travel by road is quicker and easier. The one recommendation for the water route was that fewer robbers would be met. When the Japanese began to run regular steamers, however, the Koreans very soon learned how much quicker, easier and cheaper this form of travel is, and at the present time the coastwise steamers carry crowds of natives. Many of these craft are small and obsolete. Not a few of them have doubtless been condemned in Japan and have been brought over to this country where few questions are asked and inspections are comparatively rare. No limit seems to be placed upon the number of passengers that will be booked for passage. I have seen little steamers whose capacity was forty or fifty people loaded down with a hundred or more. The cabin would be so full that there was hardly sitting space on the floor, to say nothing of attempting to lie down. These wheezy craft occasionally blow up and oftener strike an obstruction and founder. There is no old resident of Seoul who cannot tell you a long list of gruesome yarns about the steamers that used to ply between Seoul and Chemulpo by the river before the railroad was built. This latter is truly an eleemosynary institution, and deserves to make handsome profits.

Seoul boasts of one other vehicle which is fast becoming obsolete, but which once formed a picturesque addition to the street scenery of the capital. It is a one-wheeled chair. The seat is placed on two long poles, which are supported at the ends by bearers, but the weight of the rider is supported upon a sort of pedestal immediately beneath the seat. This pedestal rests upon the axle of a single iron-bound and nail-studded wheel about two feet and a half in diameter. The bearers at the ends of the poles simply propel the machine and keep it from tipping from side to side. It is a reasonable proposition, but at first sight it affects the risibilities of the spectator with irresistible force. Only certain high grades of officials are allowed to make use of this singular vehicle.

During the past few years certain portions of the country

AUTOMATIC WATER-MILL

A beam balanced at the centre, with a trough on one end and a pestle on the other. The water enters into the trough and depresses that end, and then flowing out because of the depression, lets the pestle fall into

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have enjoyed postal and telegraph facilities. One of the few successful enterprises of the government along foreign lines was the running of telegraph wires to some of the important centres of the land and to the Yalu River, where the wires were connected with the Chinese system, thus completing communication with Europe. This was done some twenty years ago, but the present postal facilities are of much more recent date. An attempt was made to establish a sort of postal system in 1884, but the severe disturbances of that year and the return to power of the conservative element postponed the final establishment of the system until about ten years ago. The question naturally arises as to what the Koreans did during all those long centuries before the introduction of these modern methods. In the "good old days" there was no need to hurry, except in case of very serious disturbance in the provinces, due to invasion or rebellion. If either of these evils threatened the government, it had a method of learning about it almost as soon as it could have done by the modern telegraph. The whole country is dotted with fire-mountains, so situated that the beacon fires flashed from peak to peak without interruption from one end of the peninsula to the other. Each station was in the care of a keeper, whose duty it was to pass the word along each night by flare of torch. Every evening the beacon fires flashed across the valleys from the four quarters of the land, and focussed at the station on Namsan, or South Mountain, within the walls of the capital. This station was plainly visible from the gates of the palace, and each night an official stood waiting the message. When the light flared up, he waited to see whether more than one was to be shown. If not, he carried to the King the message that the whole country was at peace. This pleasant sight used to be one of the features of life in Seoul in the old days, but to-day the small boys festoon with their kites the web of telegraph wires that has been woven over the city, and the uneasy burr of the telegraph receiver has taken the place of the genial flash of the evening beacon.

The old-time *yongma,* or horse-relay system, was the precursor of the postal system, and it did its work well for over fourteen centuries. Government stables were established at frequent intervals along all the main routes, and official correspondence went by post-horse. Some of us have seen the messenger arrive at one of these stations, dismount from his jaded animal and leap into the saddle of another mount, and, with a cut of the whip and the clatter of hoofs, disappear down the road, bound city-ward or country-ward with some important missive. The trouble with this system was that the common people were not allowed to use it. The messengers were, of course, often bribed to take private letters, but as a rule the people made use of casual travellers to deliver messages in distant towns. The guild known as the "Peddlers'," a name that has come into disrepute during recent times, was much utilised for the delivery of letters. The wandering peddlers covered the country as a network, and one could very often communicate through them with distant friends. It hardly needs to be said that the establishment of steamship lines and the building of railroads is working wonderful changes in the Korean's ability to communicate with distant sections of the country. In former times it took weeks to get a letter to the northeastern part of the country, but now it is a matter of days only.

CHAPTER XIX

KOREAN INDUSTRIES

THE predominant industry of Korea, as of most civilised countries, is agriculture. The silent processes of nature make less stir in the newspapers, but even in such a feverishly industrial country as America we find that wheat, corn, tobacco and cotton are the dominant factors of our wealth. But in Korea agriculture holds a relatively higher place than in most countries. They realise fully that the soil is the source of wealth, and that the safest investment is a good paddy-field. It is the farmer who is expected to bear the brunt of national taxation, perhaps on the theory that nature does more than half the work for him. What would life on the farm be in America if almost the total revenue of the country was collected from the farmer, while the merchant, manufacturer and house-owner went free? This government has always, and successfully, reckoned upon the passionate love of the Korean for the soil. A gentleman of the purest blood can engage in farming without soiling his escutcheon, but to be a merchant or manufacturer or broker would be beneath his dignity. Agriculture is so dignified an occupation that it stands quite alone among Korean industries.

The implements used are of the crudest. The plough is a very primitive affair with a single handle and is drawn by a bullock. The ploughshare is of iron, and the work is fairly effective, though subsoiling is not possible. For the most part human excrement is used as a fertiliser, and, where this is not obtainable in sufficient quantities, grass or leaves are substituted. After the ploughing all agricultural processes are carried on by hand, — cultivating, reaping, threshing and winnowing. A study

of their methods shows that the Koreans get the best results possible from the amount of labour and capital expended. They understand irrigation, drainage and rotation of crops.

In the manipulation of their produce and in preparing it for market they show commendable skill. Their rice is nicely hulled, and sometimes dusted with powdered kaolin to make it white. They separate the bark of flax and ramie by putting it in a pit upon hot stones and then pouring in water. For many centuries the tough paper which they make from the bark of the paper-mulberry has been famous throughout the Far East, and Mongols and Manchus always demanded large quantities of it in the lists of their tribute.

The Korean ginseng has already been described. Long centuries of apprenticeship have made the Korean an adept in the cultivation and preparation of this useless but highly prized plant. It is a fact with which many Americans may not be acquainted, that ginseng is consumed almost solely for its supposed aphrodisiac qualities, and the huge amounts produced in America and exported to China simply add fuel to the basest passions of man. It may not be as harmful as opium, but the moral principle involved is precisely the same.

A wild variety of this plant, called "mountain ginseng," commands fabulous prices, and a large number of people are annually engaged in searching for it.

The Koreans have developed a keen sense of the value of by-products. The straw and bran from their cereals are carefully utilised, and in a general way it may truthfully be said that what the Korean throws away is not worth keeping.

Another great Korean industry is that of fishing. Taken as a whole, the Koreans eat very little beef. Only the well-to-do can afford it, and as you travel through the country it will be only in the larger centres that it will be procurable. This will readily appear when we add that, though the average wage of the Korean is only about one-sixth as much as that of an American, the cost of a cow or bull is almost as much here

as in our own land. The Korean would no sooner think of killing a good, strong, healthy bull for beef than the reader would think of killing a valuable dog for its pelt. But the consumption of fish, especially in its dried or salted form, is very great throughout the country. Off the northeast coast enormous quantities of ling are caught. These are dried and taken into every hamlet in the country. Everywhere along the coast, and in towns easily accessible therefrom, fresh fish are largely consumed. Everything is fish that comes to the Korean's net; sharks, cuttle-fish, sea-slugs and all. They have never developed the enterprise or the daring to engage in the lucrative whale fisheries off the eastern coast, but the Japanese and Russians have reaped golden harvests there. The former have secured the right, by concession from the Korean government, to fish anywhere along the Korean coast, and their brutal methods are rapidly driving the Koreans out of the business.

The work of gathering and transporting fuel engages the attention of many thousands of people. The Koreans differ from the Japanese in that, while the latter keep themselves warm by the use of heavy blankets, and in winter are most frequently seen crouched about their charcoal braziers, the Korean heats his house generously and depends upon his hot stone floor for comfort. The effect, while perhaps no better from a hygienic standpoint, is decidedly more comfortable. It is also much more costly. People have wondered why Korea looks so barren compared with Japan. The reason lies right here. Koreans keep their wood cut down to the quick, to provide themselves with fuel, while the Japanese let the forests grow. The Japanese are the more picturesque, but the Koreans are more comfortable. Wood forms but a small part of Korean fuel. The common people usually burn grass or small fagots. This they feed slowly into the fire, utilising every particle of the heat. One firing in the morning and one at night suffice to cook the food and to keep the stone floor warm. One of the most characteristic sights about Seoul is the long lines of bullocks and

ponies bringing in their bulky loads of grass and fagots. Every morning and evening when the fires are simultaneously lighted a thick pall of smoke hangs over the city for two hours or more. On still winter nights it is so dense that one is almost choked by it, and there is no doubt that the prevalent bronchial troubles are aggravated by this means. Everywhere on the hillsides you will see boys scraping up the dead grass with their ingenious bamboo rakes. In Seoul a man's fuel bill ordinarily amounts to about a quarter of his income. In the country it is of course much cheaper.

In a country entirely destitute of salt wells or mines, and dependent upon the sea for this great necessity of life, we are not surprised to learn that an unusually large number of people are engaged in salt-making. This is all the more evident since the appliances are so poor and human labour has to make up the deficit.

On wide, flat plains near the eastern coast oblong fields are prepared with ditches between them. Sea-water is pumped or ladled into these ditches and then thrown upon a loose brown loam, which covers the hard-packed surface of the fields to a depth of three or four inches. As the water evaporates, it leaves this brown loam saturated with salt. This is then scraped into piles and carried to vats where the heavy brine is drained off. This brine is further evaporated in huge kettles made of lime cement. The lime is made by burning clam-shells. As the kettles are eight or ten feet wide and very shallow, they are not strong enough to support their own weight; so, from rows of stout poles above, cords are let down and fastened to hooks which pass through the bottom of the kettle. Each kettle has a score of these hooks. When the brine is boiled down, the wet crystals are scraped off and put in bags for market. This salt is exceedingly coarse and dirty, but there is no question of its saltiness. Koreans complain that our salt is insipid. Foreigners would never use Korean salt if they could once witness its manufacture. The bullocks and cows used in the fields are

BOYS WHO GATHER GRASS FOR FUEL
DEAD CHILD TIED TO TREE

continually defiling them, and no effort is made to remove the filth.

On the west coast there are many places where sea-water is ladled directly into the kettles and boiled down without any intermediate process of evaporation.

Sericulture is one of the historic industries of Korea, and can be carried on by a gentleman without derogation from his dignity. The infrequency of thunder-storms favours the industry, and the product is considerable, though not sufficient to figure in trade reports.

In textile industries Korea holds no very high place. Rough cotton, hemp and grass cloth are woven in clumsy hand-looms, and a cheap, plain silk is produced. The dyeing arrangements are very crude, and the product cannot in any sense be compared with that of China or Japan. Certain portions of the peninsula are almost ideal for the production of both cotton and silk, and the time will doubtless come when these important staples will be much more extensively cultivated.

History and archæology show that at one time Korea produced good examples of the ceramic art, but to-day only the crudest work is done in this line. The same is true of metal castings. Not for many centuries has Korea cast a great bell like those which hang in various towns and monasteries, as eloquent reminders of past and forgotten skill.

The goldsmiths and silversmiths turn out some interesting and curious pieces, but the monotony of design and carelessness of finish detract very greatly from their value, and the apparent ignorance of the use of alloys to harden the precious metals lessens the usefulness of the product. A kind of bronze work, mostly in the form of native dinner services, is turned out in considerable quantities, but the old work is so much superior to the new that here too we must conclude that the handicraft has deteriorated.

Mining is an industry as old as history. Gold is found all over the peninsula, and the Koreans mine it with great enthu-

siasm. It is mostly placer mining, but in the north one frequently runs across more ambitious attempts in the shape of shafts. The Koreans build a fire on the ledge, and when the rock is hot they throw on water, which cracks the quartz and makes it possible to dig it out with their rude picks. This primitive method makes it impossible to proceed in any but a vertical direction, and if the vein should happen to run obliquely it is soon lost. They crush the ore beneath great round granite boulders, which are rocked back and forth over it by the use of levers or handles fastened to its sides. Only the free gold is obtained, and the waste is very great.

We have it on the authority of expert foreign miners that gold is found very irregularly in the Korean veins. For a distance it may be very rich, and then the vein will narrow to almost nothing for many feet or yards and then open out again freely. There seem to be no great masses of rock in which there is a small but even amount of the yellow metal, as is the case in the Rand in South Africa. This makes Korean gold-mining more of a venture than in some places.

Absence from home and distance from constabulary control breed the same contempt for the amenities of life among miners here as elsewhere.

In spite of the fact that so large a portion of the peninsula is of granite, there are extensive portions where coal is found. In the vicinity of Pyeng-yang there are rich anthracite veins, and on the east coast bituminous coal is found in various places. When properly opened up, these valuable resources will be of immense importance to the country.

Iron is not so widely distributed, but in one considerable district in Kang-wun Province there are immense beds of iron ore. The people scrape it up from the surface of the ground and smelt it in their rude furnaces by the use of charcoal. It is used very largely for their great iron rice-kettles and for various agricultural implements. For all wrought-iron work it has been found cheaper to import foreign rod-iron and sheath-

PLACER GOLD-MINING

ing. Foreigners have looked over this ground with some care, and they affirm that there are practically unlimited quantities of the finest iron ore, awaiting the hand of modern scientific workmanship.

Copper, silver, lead and nickel are all found in moderate quantities in the peninsula, but with the exception of silver they are not of enough account to warrant extended description.

The primitive occupations of hunting and trapping still have their followers in Korea. In the north there is a regular guild or brotherhood of tiger-hunters, and their bravery and pluck are beyond dispute. It was from their ranks that the garrison of Kang-wha was chosen, which inflicted such punishment upon the French in 1866. The chances which these hunters take in the pursuit of their chosen calling would make your modern Nimrod stare with incredulity. They use old match-locks, which are discharged by letting the smouldering end of a thick cord fall into the flash-pan. This cord is wound around the arm, and when the moment for action comes, the hunter blows upon the smouldering end and fastens it in a fork of the hammer, so that when the trigger is pulled there is some small chance of the thing "going off." One of these hunters well described the difference between their antiquated weapons and the modern repeating rifle:

"Korean hunter meet tiger. Bang! Wreough! Dead hunter! Foreign man meet tiger. Bang — click — bang — click — bang! Dead tiger!"

Cobblers, coopers, hatters, farriers, blacksmiths, carpenters, masons, joiners, carvers, dyers, tailors, carters, saddlers and all the other handicraftsmen who go to make up the industrial army of a complicated civilisation are sufficiently described by their names. It might be well to add that the tools which these men use are of the most primitive kind. Every native nail is hammered out by hand. Every yard of twine is twisted by hand. This is what insures the growth of foreign commerce, for an American firm can place nails on the Korean market

at a price which throws the native product completely in the shade.

It is this progressive displacement of native labour which stirs up these people and makes them question the value of their former conservatism.

GAMES

Korea is no exception to the rule that the various nations of the world develop peculiar and distinctive forms of amusement. There are some forms that all have in common, but there are others that have only to be mentioned and the hearer places them at once. Of such are cricket, base-ball, curling, bull-fighting, skiing and lacrosse.

Korea also has its own pet diversion — stone-fights. This amusement is something of an anomaly, for Koreans are naturally the mildest and most inoffensive of people; but one has only to spend the first month of the year here to learn that the people are as passionately fond of this dangerous sport as Americans are of base-ball.

The fact that these fights occur only in the first month of the year illustrates the general fact that in no country is the periodicity of sports more marked than here. There is a special season for stone-fights, kite-flying, pitch-penny, swinging, top-spinning and the like. The reason why the stone-fights occur only in spring is because then only are the fields bare and ample space is available for the contest. After the winter has kept the Korean imprisoned for three long months in the cramped quarters of his little thatched hut, the touch of spring means much more to him than it does to us, who live in comparatively spacious houses. His dormant physical energy awakes to new life, and he simply must come out and romp over the hills, open the safety-valve and give vent to his repressed faculties. The stone-fight originated seven hundred years ago, in the days of the former dynasty, when it was invented for the delectation of an imbecile King. It was at first confined to the palace

grounds, but it soon spread abroad and became the national game.

Different sections of the same town may be pitted against each other, but more often contiguous villages defy each other and fly the banner of challenge. Out they pour into the empty, fenceless fields, some armed with thick clubs and protected by heavy padded helmets, while others merely throw stones. The champions of either side prance up and down before their respective factions, twirling their clubs and breathing out threatenings and slaughter. Stones begin to fly, most of them falling short of the mark, and the rest being deftly dodged. After the two warring factions have reinforced their courage by streams of most libellous invective, and have worked themselves up to the fighting pitch, they move toward each other warily, the stones fly more thickly, the champions prance more vaingloriously. Meanwhile the multitudes of white-clothed non-combatants, who cover the surrounding hills, shout encouragement to their respective favourites. The champions gradually close with each other and give and receive sounding thwacks on the head or shoulder, while over them the stones fly thick and fast. Suddenly a deafening yell goes up from one side and a wild charge is made. The opposite side gives way, and it looks as if the day were won, but as soon as the first ardour of the pursuit is over the fugitives turn and make a counter-charge. Unlucky is the wight who is overtaken before he gains the thick of his own ranks again. And so it goes on by the hour, rush and counter-rush, wild shoutings of delighted spectators, clouds of dust, broken pates, profanity unlimited and gruesome gaps where erstwhiles were gleaming teeth. The excitement is much the same as that of the Spanish bull-fight, and the same fierce, elemental passions are let loose in participants and spectators alike. Rarely does a season pass but three or four men are killed in these encounters, but if the excitement runs too high the police or gendarmes are likely to interfere. In the heat of action houses are sometimes razed, but as a usual thing the fight

results only in bruised arms, broken heads and unlimited invective. The heaviest traffic on the electric tramway is when the crowds go out of the city gates to watch these stone-fights. One day last year thirty-four thousand people were carried, a number twice as large as the average. It would be safe to say that in the environs of Seoul twenty-five thousand persons witnessed the fights that day.

Kite-flying is a national institution here as in China and Japan. The kites are not so elaborate as in the neighbouring countries, but the interest in the sport is fully as great, for there are what may be called kite-fights that are very exciting. By dextrous manipulation the rival kite-fliers get their strings crossed. Then comes the contest of pure skill, to see which can saw the string of the other in two first. You see the tiny kites high in the air darting this way and that, seemingly without rhyme or reason, but all the time their owners are manœuvring for position, just as rival yachtsmen do in our own land. When one of them thinks that the right moment has arrived, he makes his kite dash across the path of the other and clinch in the final struggle. Sooner or later one of the strings is cut, and the liberated kite floats away on the breeze, followed by a crowd of eager boys. The kites, though scientifically constructed, cost but very little, but the cord must be of the finest, and it must be smeared with a kind of paste mixed with pulverised glass. This makes it better able to saw the other cord in two.

The next most popular amusement is pitch-penny, at which all the boys play "for keeps." A shallow hole is scraped in the hard earth beside the road, and the first player stands off ten feet or more and pitches half a dozen coins at the hole. Any that lodge in it are his; but there is more to do. The other boy indicates which of the thrown coins he is to hit with a leaden disc, which is used for this purpose. The player throws, and if he hits that particular coin, all are his, but if he misses, the other boy takes his turn. This too is a spring sport, and at that season

you will frequently see two lines of interested spectators watching intently to see some skilful thrower make a good shot down the narrow alley between them.

On the great festival of the fifth day of the fifth moon Koreans give themselves up to the delights of swinging. Sometimes the lofty branch of a pine-tree is used, but more often two great poles are erected for the purpose. These are held in place by guys, and are variously ornamented. The Koreans are adventurous swingers, and accidents are not infrequent. The rough straw ropes break sooner or later, and someone gets a nasty fall, which terminates the sport for that season.

Girls take pleasure in a sort of see-saw on the 15th of the first month. This is not the same as ours. The board is only six or seven feet long and is laid over a fulcrum only five inches high. The girls stand on the ends and jump up and down, the impact of each throwing the other several feet into the air. They would not be able to preserve their equilibrium except for a strong cord, like a clothes-line, over their heads, to which they cling. On this same festival there are mighty tugs-of-war in the country villages. The ropes are huge hawsers, eight or ten inches thick, and upwards of a hundred feet long. The village turns out *en masse,* men, women and children, and pull until they are exhausted. This always takes place at night under the full moon.

In the autumn and winter the favourite sport of the young men is a sort of battledore and shuttlecock. The shuttlecock is a cash piece wrapped in paper, the latter being twisted into a tail which makes the shuttlecock always fall properly. Strangely enough, the Koreans use the side of the foot for a battledore, and to unaccustomed eyes it looks ridiculous enough to see two men hopping about on one foot, trying to keep the shuttlecock in the air. This is a purely Korean development of this game.

They are very fond of trying feats of strength in what they call "arm wrestling." The two contestants sit down at a table and place their elbows squarely upon it. Then they grasp each

other's thumbs, and each man tries to bend the arm of the other over backward until it touches the table. This is a genuine and severe test of strength, as anyone will discover by trying it.

Hide-and-seek and blind-man's-buff are common, and little girls go about with wooden or rag dolls strapped to their backs like true babies. Jack-stones, fox-and-geese, cat's cradle and other juvenile games are also played.

As for sedentary games, the chief places are occupied by chess and *padok*. In a very general way their chess resembles ours, but the board is somewhat different, and the rules are so changed that knowledge of one method does not help in playing the other. The game of *padok* is far more difficult than either Korean or European chess. It consists in enclosing spaces on a wide go-bang board with white and black discs. The foresight and the mathematical ability required to play this game successfully are astonishing. It is a Chinese invention, and surely does credit to its inventor. Poe says that the game of draughts requires a higher quality of mind than chess, but *padok,* while requiring the same kind of skill as draughts, is probably ten times as difficult.

For gambling purposes Koreans use dominoes and "cards," the latter being made of stiff oiled paper half an inch wide and eight inches long. Coolies on the street corners, waiting for a job, while away the time playing a game that is a cross between backgammon and fox-and-geese, scratching the necessary lines on the hard earth in lieu of a "board." If you see half a dozen heads together, you will know that a game is in progress, and that the stakes are high, perhaps even five cents. As each man throws the dice, he gives his thigh a resounding slap. This is supposed to bring luck, just as we have seen people in more enlightened lands murmur fond entreaties into the dice-box before throwing.

These are, of course, not all the games Koreans play, but they are the commonest and most distinctive.

CHAPTER XX

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TRADE

UNTIL recent years the currency of Korea was only the unwieldy cash, and this had much to do in preserving the immemorial custom of barter. Even to-day this form of trade has by no means ceased, and many Koreans still look upon rice or cotton or linen as legal tender. We have already explained that in the country there are stated places where periodical markets are held. There are but few Koreans who cannot find one of these *chang* within ten miles of their homes. As a rule, these are held once in five days; but there are many special markets for special objects. Almost every Korean product has its special season. The agricultural products are naturally more in evidence in the summer and autumn. Almost all farmers add to their income by some sort of handicraft during the winter, and the products of such work are on sale during the winter and spring months.

For long centuries there existed a Peddlers' Guild, composed of thousands of men throughout the country who travelled on foot with packs on their backs, and peddled their goods from house to house. They had regular circuits, and their organisation was quite complete. In later times this guild fell into decay, and was superseded by a gang of evil men who were used by corrupt officials to do questionable work. They were not peddlers, and the unsavoury reputation of the "Peddlers' Guild" should not attach to the genuine peddlers.

It was mainly through the markets and the peddlers that domestic trade was carried on in the country. In the great centres ordinary shops were common, and almost every commodity was handled by a separate guild. The freemasonry of

trade reached extensive bounds. Many of these guilds were, and are, incipient or partial insurance companies, and loss by fire or death became a matter of mutual aid. These guilds were taxed, not regularly, but as occasion might demand. Whenever some sudden pressure was put on the royal household for money, a draft upon the guilds was always honoured.

Korean shops are of two kinds, open and closed! The ordinary shop is hardly more than a stall, open directly upon the street, where the purchaser can pick up and examine almost any article in stock. The larger merchants, however, who handle silks, cotton, linen, grass-cloth, shoes and certain other goods, have nothing whatever on view. You enter and ask for what you want, and it is brought forth from the storeroom or closet. This seems very strange to foreigners, who always want to compare and select their goods. Often enough a truculent merchant, after showing one shade of silk, will refuse to show more, and say that if this is not what you want he has nothing that will suit you. You are expected to state exactly what you want, and when that is produced and examined, the price alone is expected to require consideration. Shopping in Korea is not reckoned one of the joys of life, as is so often the case in the West. When ladies of the upper class wish to make purchases of silk or other goods, they send out and have the merchants bring the goods to their residences. All foreigners who are aware of the peculiarities of the Korean merchants do likewise.

The great merchant houses in Seoul have no shop-signs whatever, but instead of this they have runners or agents on the street who solicit the attention of the passer-by and ask him to come in and look at the goods.

The sale and purchase of real estate in large towns is always effected through house-brokers, but fields change hands very commonly by direct communication between the parties interested. The legal rate of commission to the broker is one per cent of the purchase price of the house, and is paid by the seller. The purchaser furnishes two pounds of tobacco to be consumed

AN INTERESTING CHESS PROBLEM

during the progress of negotiations. There is a House-brokers' Guild, and the name of each member is registered at the mayor's office. If a broker falsifies the amount demanded by the seller and "eats" the extra money, he is very likely to be found out, in which case he will be expelled from the guild and his license will be taken away.

The rate of interest is everywhere proportionate to the safety of the investment. For this reason we find that in Korea money ordinarily brings from two to five per cent a month. Good security is generally forthcoming, and so one may well ask why it is so precarious to lend. The answer is not creditable to Korean justice. In case a man has to foreclose a mortgage and enter upon possession of the property he will need the sanction of the authorities, since possession, here as elsewhere, is nine points of the law. The trouble is that a large fraction of the remaining point is dependent upon the caprice or the venality of the official whose duty it is to adjudicate the case. In a land where bribery is almost second nature, and where private rights are of small account unless backed up by some sort of influence, the thwarting of justice is extremely common. And so the best apparent security may prove only a broken reed when the creditor comes to lean upon it. Let us take a concrete case. A man borrows a sum of money, giving his house-deed as security. He then makes out a false deed or secures a new one from the Mayor on the plea that the old one is lost. He then sells the house to a third party and leaves for parts unknown. The mortgage becomes due and the mortgagee proceeds to foreclose. It is now a question of which deeds are the right ones. There should be no difficulty in adjudicating the case, but the occupant, having purchased in good faith, is naturally loath to move out. He is willing to put down a neat sum to secure his possession. It all depends upon the character of the official and is no longer a matter of mere jurisprudence. Herein lies the uncertainty.

When money is loaned at the minimum rate of two per cent, or in exceptional cases one and a half per cent a month, the

borrower, besides giving security, generally gets some well-known and reliable merchant to endorse the note. As this merchant cannot afford to have his credit brought in question, the chances of loss are very small.

Considering the great inequality in commercial ethics here, the Koreans trust each other in a really remarkable manner. The aggregate of money placed in trust is very large. The average Korean would scorn to ask from his friend more than a simple receipt for money turned over in trust, and it is my deliberate conviction that in all but a small fraction of cases the ordinary sense of justice and decency is a far greater deterrent to indirection than any legal restraints could possibly be.

Foreign commerce has been carried on for many centuries between Korea and the neighbouring countries. It is not true that Korea was first opened to import and export trade during the present generation. Commerce with China has been almost uninterrupted for fifteen hundred years, though it has been carried on in such a quiet way as largely to escape observation. Ginseng, furs and other special products have been regularly marketed in China, and silks, spices and other luxuries have been as regularly imported. The annual embassy to Peking was allowed to engage in trade.

On the other side of the peninsula the annual trade with Japan through the single station at Fusan was considerable, and was almost uninterrupted from about 1406 till 1866, and even before the opening of the fifteenth century there must have been some interchange of goods between the two countries, although the Japanese freebooters of the fourteenth century did much to keep the two countries from mutual intercourse.

It is a fact to which attention should be specially directed, that before the coming of Roman Catholic emissaries to Korea, and the consequent fear that the foreign religion was a cover for political designs, this was no more a hermit kingdom than was Japan or China. The efforts which both these other countries made to keep foreigners out were more persistent and more radical than

anything which has occurred in Korea. It is merely the fact that Korean exclusiveness was impinged upon somewhat later in the day that won for her the term "hermit." The difficulties encountered in opening up this country to foreign intercourse were nothing compared with those required to secure the acquiescence of either Japan or China to such action. I am prepared to say that the conservatism of the Korean has always been less than that of the Chinese. This is simply a sociological manifestation of the law of inertia. The late regent never cherished a fonder hatred against foreigners than did Prince Tuan, and no Korean ruler of the past, if brought to life, would exterminate them with greater glee than would the present Empress Dowager of China, had she but the ability.

It was between the years 1876 and 1884 that Korea was fully opened to foreign commerce in our western acceptance of the term. From the very first the trade, both import and export, has shown a steady and healthy growth. The Korean was very quick to learn the value of Manchester cottons, American petroleum and Japanese friction matches, and now all these and many other products of other countries find their way to the remotest parts of the peninsula.

This import trade owes very much to the excellent way in which the Customs has been handled. From the very first it has been in English hands. One has only to look at Turkey to see how different the status of foreign trade might be in Korea had the customs duties been collected by Korean or by any other Far Eastern people. It was a sad day for this country when the English hand was removed from the helm in favour of the Japanese.

We can here give only the briefest sketch of the export and import trade of the country. The minutiæ are of interest only to the statistician. For the past four years the value of the exports has averaged, in round numbers, $4,000,000. This does not include gold bullion, which has been about $2,500,000 a year.

The goods exported are, in order of their value, beans, rice,

cowhides, ginseng, raw cotton, fish, whale flesh and blubber, paper, sea-weed and barley. Other things which figure prominently are beche-de-mer, bones, cattle, feathers, mats, medicines, millet, oysters, sesamum, raw silk, tallow, tobacco, wheat, copper, curios and grass-cloth.

The value of foreign imports in 1901 and 1902 was about the same, namely, about $3,750,000; for 1903 it was $5,750,000, and for 1904 it was $8,800,000. The great increase in 1904 was due to the import of $2,000,000 worth of railway material for use in the construction of the new lines. Then, in order of value, come English and American gray shirtings, Japanese sheetings, Japanese miscellaneous cotton goods, Japanese thread and yarn, silk piece goods, tobacco, English and American sheetings, American petroleum, English and American white shirtings, rice, clothing, provisions, timber and *sake*. After these come figured shirtings, cotton reps, bar and other iron, galvanised iron sheeting, bags and ropes, building materials, coal, raw cotton, cotton wadding, dyes, fish, flour, fruit, grain, grass-cloth, wines and spirits, matches, medicines, mining supplies, Russian petroleum, paper, porcelain, salt, soy, sugar and telegraph and telephone supplies.

Up to the present time both the import and export trade have suffered for lack of facilities for transportation in the interior; but the railroads that are being rapidly constructed will help to overcome this difficulty, and foreign commerce ought to receive a decided impetus.

Of late years, Japanese textile fabrics have been competing successfully with the English and American, and bid fair in time to displace them even as Japanese matches have displaced the Austrian product. This readjustment of the sources of Korea's foreign supplies is the most prominent feature of the commercial situation to-day. There seems to be a natural fitness in the mutual interchange of raw material and finished product between the two countries, and there is every sign that Japan will foster and conserve this growing reciprocity by every means in her power. If American cotton goods are to compete with Japanese

SWINGING

here, it must be because better goods are offered at the same price or the same goods at a lower price. This supposes other things to be equal, but in fact other things are *not* equal. An army of Japanese small retailers covering the country like a network, unable to speak or read any language but their own, and connected intimately with Japanese sources of supply, make it certain that Japanese goods will be handled unless some very strong consideration intervenes of a distinctly pecuniary nature. There is a single American firm in Korea handling general goods, but it is particularly interested only in petroleum and rice. In other words, America enjoys only the very smallest facilities for commercial contact with Korea. Our merchants hardly need to be told that much more enters into successful trade competition than the mere quality and price of goods. They must be properly exhibited, advertised and placed before the public. The personal equation enters largely into the problem, and under existing conditions it is only a matter of time when the great staples of American commerce will be known here only by name. There is to-day a magnificent opening for any firm that will import Oregon pine into Korea by sailing-vessel or other cheap method of transportation. All planing and moulding is here done by hand at great expense. Planed and matched flooring would have large and lucrative sale. We say this to indicate only one of a large number of favourable openings that might be entered by enterprising people. The large and steady influx of Japanese must continue for years, and building operations which are being carried on with feverish energy will call for increasing quantities of material from abroad, especially timber. If Americans want to participate in this trade, they should enter the field and secure a footing before the commercial flux has crystallised.

CHAPTER XXI

MONUMENTS AND RELICS

IN a country whose legendary history stretches back four thousand years, one would expect to find many monuments and relics of the past, and in Korea we are not disappointed. None of these take the form of buildings in which men lived or worshipped. The style of architecture of the whole Far East is of a kind that does not last beyond a few hundred years without undergoing such extensive repairs as to constitute a virtual rebuilding of the edifice. So, while we will not look for any temples like those of ancient Egypt, we will not despair of finding other remains of almost equal antiquity.

The oldest monument in Korea, so far as we can ascertain, is the Altar of Tangun, erected on the very summit of the highest peak on the island of Kangwha, Mari-san. The Tangun is the fabled King who began his rule in Korea over two thousand years before Christ. He is supposed to have erected this altar whereon to worship his own divine father, Whanin. It is impossible to guarantee the genuineness of the tradition; but sure it is that all down through the recorded history of the country we read that at intervals of about a century money has been appropriated for the repair of this most ancient relic. Its immense age is beyond question. It consists of a walled enclosure thirty feet square, perched upon the sharp point of the bare, rocky mountain peak. On one side of the enclosure rises the altar, about sixteen feet square and eight feet high, the ascent to the top being accomplished by means of a stone stairway. The foundation stones and the first few courses give evidence of extreme age. They are as moss-grown and seamed by time as the native rock of the mountain from which they seem to grow. The upper

courses are apparently of more recent structure, and yet old compared with our most venerable European structures. Only the top itself has apparently been restored during the past five centuries. Standing upon this altar-crowned summit, as the ocean wind drives the clouds across the serrated tops of the rugged range one tries to imagine himself back in the days of Abraham, when Tangun stood by and directed the building of this heaven-touching altar, and the flames leaped high about his burning hecatombs. The mind faints in the effort to grasp the meaning of four thousand years. Not even China herself, that synonym of cyclopean age, can show as ancient and authentic a memento of the past.

Near this altar, but on another spur of the mountain, is the walled fortress supposed to have been built by the three sons of Tangun. It is occupied to-day by a Buddhist monastery, showing how the magpie may inherit the eagle's nest. Here it was that the Korean tiger-hunters congregated at the time the French landed on Korean soil in 1866, and it was from these ancient battlements that they drove back what they supposed to be the mortal enemies of their fatherland. In the town of Kangdong in the north, there is a mound four hundred and ten feet in circumference, which is believed to contain all that is mortal of that first great ruler, Tangun. In Munwha there is a shrine to the Korean trinity, Whanin, Whanung and Tangun, the first being the creator, the second his son, and the third his earthly incarnation. Our interest in the story is enhanced by the fact that he came to earth in the form of a wind, and was incarnated through the medium of a virgin.

Compared with Tangun, Kija seems almost modern, though in truth he antedated David of Israel. The site of his ancient capital is pointed out beside the modern city of Pyeng-yang, and before the Chinese tore it up for breastworks in the war of 1894, the situation of the streets of that capital were plainly seen, marked out on the plain with almost the regularity of a Western American town. In the middle of it is Kija's Well, believed to

have been dug at his command. Koreans affirm that a jar of its waters weighs a pound more than a similar amount of water from any other well in the land. The modern city has no wells at all, because the people have the notion that the city is like a boat, and that to dig a well would scuttle the craft. The illusion is made the more complete by a great stone post set in the bank of the Tadong River above the town, for to this post the boat is supposed to be moored. Near the city is found the grave of Kija with its stone images set about like guardian beasts, and there is a tablet partly defaced which claims to date from that ancient time.

Coming south to the site of the capital of ancient Silla, the modern town of Kyong-ju, we find multiplied relics of the remote past, for even Silla began before the coming of Christ and reached her prime before the days of Constantine the Great. Near this ancient town we find a numerous cluster of huge mounds, each the mausoleum of a King of Silla. They will be found to be several hundred feet in circumference and about seventy-five feet high. If we should dig into one of them, we should probably find the ashes of the dead King flanked on either side by that of a young maiden, who was compelled to drink the bitter cup of death before her time in order to grace the obsequies of a monarch. This we know by inference, for one of the later Kings gave specific orders that at his death no people should be killed. It is recorded that when the Japanese invaded Korea in 1592 they dug open the grave of one of the rulers of Karak, contemporaneous with Silla, and found the bodies of two females lying on either side the King. They appeared to have been embalmed, for we are told that when they were exposed to air they rapidly disintegrated. A few rods outside the modern town is found a pavilion, beneath which hangs one of the largest bells in the world. It was cast over fourteen hundred years ago, before the pride of Silla began to decay. In measurement it equals the great bell in Moscow, but is not so heavy. On the other hand, it still hangs from its great

beam and rings out its summons as deep and clear as the day on which it was cast. In a sense this is the most interesting and remarkable relic in Korea, for it makes us take so many other things for granted. The ability to mine the ore, smelt it, make the mould, cast the bell without a flaw and hang it in its place — this ability, I say, argues a high degree of civilisation. I doubt whether such a work could be accomplished by the Koreans to-day with success.

Another relic of that civilisation is an ancient stone tower some twenty feet high, shaped like a monster bottle. This was the astronomical observatory of ancient Silla, and its shape may perhaps be explained on the theory that it was like a well from whose depths one could look up and see the stars even during the day. Of the great Golden Pagoda, the splendid product of Buddhism in its lusty youth, nothing now remains but the two lower stories. An examination of this wreck, however, will show us many evidences of artistic skill. One of these is seen in the battered bas-reliefs which flank the door. One of these has a halo like one of the old-time Christian saints. The date of this, as of the observatory, must be about 500 A. D.

On the eastern coast of Korea there is a stone slab inscribed with Chinese characters, which was set up by a certain prefect in order to prevent the sea from flooding a wide alluvial plain. It was supposed to have some influence upon the spirit of the sea. A later prefect scoffed at it and threw it down. The very next season a disastrous tidal wave swept over the plain, destroying many lives and ruining an incalculable amount of property. The sacrilegious prefect was driven out, and the stone set up again, since which time there has been no more trouble!

In the far north one can still find remnants of a mighty wall that was built clear across the peninsula, from the Yellow Sea to the Japan Sea, to keep out the wild barbarians which made sudden and sanguinary raids upon the peaceful citizens of Koryu. That was seven or eight centuries ago. All through the country there are scores of walled enclosures on the tops of

rugged mountains near important towns. These are relics of the days when the incursions of wild tribes made it necessary to have places of refuge at hand, where all the people could hasten in times of distress. Some of these are extremely old. One near Chemulpo is reputed to date from the beginning of our era.

Just outside the wall of Songdo, the ancient capital of Koryu, is shown a small stone bridge on which the loyal Chong Mong-ju was slain. He was faithful to the closing dynasty, and had to be put out of the way before the new one could be firmly established. On the central stone of this bridge is seen to-day a great brown blotch, which turns to a dull red in the rain, and the Koreans affirm that it is the blood of that loyal man.

Korea is filled with Buddhistic relics. There is hardly a district that does not have its monastery tucked away among the foot-hills of the mountains, and in some districts there are a dozen or more. On Kwanak Mountain alone there are said to be fourteen. They are all in more or less of a moribund condition, and monasteries that once boasted their hundreds of votaries now have half a dozen or less. One in the south was so large that the Koreans affirm that in order to stir the big kettle in which the monks' food was cooked a man had to go out in a raft upon it. We must make allowance for a vivid imagination here, but there is proof at hand that some of their monastery kettles were immense. To-day there lies in the ditch beside the road near the town of Kyong-ju a kettle that was once the main culinary utensil of a monastery. It measures over thirty feet in circumference, a clear ten feet across the mouth. One would need long arms to stir this in the middle. As a rule the most beautiful views in Korea are in the vicinity of the monasteries, for they are always surrounded by fine trees. Not a few of them are built in the midst of grand forests of deciduous trees, where the foreigner goes when he wishes to hunt. They are the retreat of deer, wild boar and leopards. The most famous monasteries in Korea are those in Diamond Mountain, a cluster of

peaks near the central eastern part of the peninsula. They are celebrated even in China, and thousands of pilgrims have sought for merit by dragging their weary limbs all the way to this holy place. Arriving at the foot of the mountains, on the west side the traveller has to dispense with his pony and go on foot or in a rude chair carried by two men. One foreign traveller describes it as a very rough road, over which one has to pass by jumping the crevices in the rocks or walking across on a single stick of wood for a bridge. He says there were "rocks around which one has to wind his way by clinging to their irregularities for fear of falling into the stream below, rocks over which the water roars and falls in beautiful cataracts; rocks covered with the Chinese names of visitors who had passed that way, these carved names forming the only foothold on the slippery surface; rocks which the monks have rendered passable only by drilling holes, driving pegs and laying logs above them; rocks on which are perched little shrines or on which are carved huge bas-reliefs of Buddhas ninety feet high and thirty feet broad at the base; and above all the towering cliffs and peaks of the parent mountain." Several flourishing monasteries are passed on the way up the steep valley, for here, if nowhere else, Buddhism seems to have some show of vitality left. After a long, steep climb the summit of the range is passed, and below this the traveller comes to the U-cham Monastery. The writer already quoted says, "Passing the cemetery with its oddly shaped stones, we were shown the pools said to have been the bathing-place of the dragons in olden times. They are nothing but ordinary pot-holes. . . . In the temple itself there are fifty-three idols, seated upon what is supposed to represent the upturned roots of a tree. Below are three hideous dragons. The story goes that when the fifty-three monks from India came to introduce Buddhism into Korea they came here and sat down beside a wall under a *nureum* tree. As they sat there, behold, three dragons came out from the well and attacked them. The animals called upon the winds to help them, and a violent gust blew

over the tree. The monks, not to be outdone, placed their images of Buddha on the roots of the tree, making an altar of what was intended for their destruction. The dragons were finally driven back into the well, upon which the monks piled stones and later built the monastery and temple. In proof of the story the monks show the place further down the hill where the water from the well flows out. These are probably the same dragons that bathe in the pools mentioned above. In the morning a young monk took me on a tour of inspection, and I had a good opportunity to see the occupants of a first-class monastery in their private apartments. These consisted of a large living room and a number of cells just large enough to lie down in. All were very clean. Each cell contained the shrine of its occupant. They all seemed to be studying industriously, and they apparently lived a happy, peaceful life compared with that of the ordinary Korean. This is, however, only their place of refuge, and each must seek the means of support by pilgrimages over rough Korean roads and through dirty Korean towns, where he receives 'low talk' from the very slaves, and begs for a living. Some probably have rich relatives who help them liberally." It is also true that many of these most celebrated monasteries have broad rice-lands, which are tilled for them by the farmers in the vicinity, the latter receiving part of the crop in payment. So far as my observation goes, there are very few monasteries that depend entirely upon charity for support. There are all sorts of ceremonies which the people are willing to pay for, such as prayers for the dead. The common people make no special distinction between the Buddhist rites and those of the despised *mudang* and *pansu*. The social level of the monk is little if any higher than that of the *pansu*, and it depends entirely upon the fancy of the petitioner whether he patronises the one or the other. Of course the temple with its curious carvings, its dim corners and its weird paintings adds impressiveness to the ceremony, and also adds to the price that must be paid. It is the wealthier class that patronise the monastery, not because of

A BOUNDARY STONE

The "rubbing" of a tablet which marked the north limit of the ancient kingdom of Silla

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any difference in religious belief, but because of the added *éclat* of the ceremony.

The discussion of Korean relics would be incomplete without a reference to the curious structures which are found in various parts of the north, and to which we give the name dolmen for want of a better. One of these consists of two huge stones set on edge to form the opposite sides of an enclosure, and across the top is laid another. The upper stone is a veritable monolith, being often fifteen feet square and two feet thick. The space enclosed is about eight feet long, five feet wide and five feet high, and the most natural conclusion is that it must be some form of sepulture; but, though the back of the space is sometimes closed with a stone, the front is always open, nor have any bones been found in any of them. There is not a word about these curious monuments in Korean history, and the only explanation that the people give is that they were built long ago to keep back the powers of the mountains, who would otherwise invade the lowlands. These stones are always partially covered with earth, and there is no doubt that originally they were entirely covered. They are often found in the midst of wide plains, and the imagination is taxed to account for the method by which those rude people moved the huge stones from the hills to their present places. I incline strongly to the opinion that they are very ancient graves, in spite of the fact that no bones are found; for even in the Koryu graves, which are quite authentic and from which so much rude pottery is taken, no bones are found, not even the skull. This shows that six or seven hundred years will suffice to cause a complete disintegration of human bones, at least in Korean soil. These dolmens are much more ancient than any Koryu grave, and the argument is so much the more conclusive. Much still remains to be done by way of excavation and examination of these relics, but the Koreans are so superstitious that little can be done at present.

All about the country there are enormous carved figures, which the Koreans call *miryŏk*. Some of them are Buddhas,

but not all. It was doubtless in the Koryu dynasty, the palmy days of Buddhism, that money was forthcoming to carry out these costly works. The great statue in the town of Eunjin stands seventy feet high or more, and the great slab of stone on its head measures some twelve feet in length. Between Seoul and Songdo two great rock figures look down upon the traveller from the heights. One is a male figure and the other a female, and whether they are distinctly Buddhistic or not has never been settled. Korean fancy weaves the most curious stories about these images. The ones last referred to are said to have been carved by a wealthy gentleman of the neighbourhood who was so troubled by beggars, whose solicitations he had not the heart to repulse, that he begged someone to tell him how he could secure peace. An aged stranger passing by told him if he would carve the two rocks, that stood up like needles near his house, into the shape of a man and a woman, he would never be troubled by beggars again. He hastened to comply, but before he had finished he found that his own wealth was exhausted, and he discovered too late that this was the reason why beggars would trouble him no more. A still more romantic tale is told of a great *miryŏk* in the south. A needy but ambitious gentleman was tramping up to Seoul to take the national examination. He found this great image in the heart of a forest, and from a fissure in its head he perceived a pear-tree to be growing. On the tree hung a pear as large as a man's head. If he could secure it and take it as a gift to the King, his fortune would be made. He climbed up the lofty image by means of the bushes and vines that grew about it until he reached the lips, but there was no way to get over the huge nose that hung out over him. He determined to crawl up one of the nostrils, hoping to find a way through to the top; so he wormed his way up with knees and elbows till he reached the point where the nostril contracts. At this instant he was terrified by a great shaking of the image, and an instant later a howling blast came down the passage and swept him out, as he confidently expected, to his doom. The

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SYMBOLS OF KOREA'S RELIGION

The upper picture shows the great stone Buddha at Eunjin. The lower picture presents the "Devil Post" on right and pile of stones in centre, on which each traveller throws one more "for luck." On extreme left is a bush to which rags, cash, fish-heads, and other things are tied to please the spirits

god had sneezed! Why had he not thought of this contingency? He fell into the thick bushes and lost consciousness, but recovered later, only to find, to his joy, that the same cataclysm which had hurled him down had also dislodged the pear, which lay at his feet. He took it to Seoul, and by its help reached that Mecca of all Koreans, official position.

But besides the genuine relics that may be found in Korea, there are a host of others that exist in the imagination of the people and exercise a powerful influence upon their thought. For instance, there is the jade flute, which is supposed to be kept at Kyong-ju in the archives of ancient Silla, and which cannot be played upon if it is taken to any other place. So firmly do the Koreans believe in this flute that they say the late regent had it brought up to Seoul, and that the present Emperor, when a boy, accidentally broke it. The regent is said to have mended it with a silver band. It is thus that the Koreans weave about the most impossible tales a web of circumstance, giving them a certain verisimilitude that might easily deceive the uninitiated. There is also the celebrated medicine stone in Pochun, which was once polished as smooth as glass, and if anyone looked into this as into a mirror he would discover from what disease he was suffering. The Koreans firmly believe that somewhere in one of the old palaces in Seoul there lie three hundred dried-up skins of Japanese unmarried females. These, they say, were exacted as an indemnity from the Japanese at the end of the great invasion of 1592. The story is that the Japanese were compelled to agree to send this number every year, but that after the first year the Koreans out of pity remitted the tribute. There is about as much sense in this statement as there is in the claim put forth by the Japanese that Korea ever paid tribute to that kingdom. It looks as if the story of these skins was invented as an offset to the fact that the Japanese sent thousands of Korean noses and ears to Japan during the days of that invasion. The falsity of the Korean story does them more credit than the truth of the Japanese story does the Japanese.

The Koreans will tell you that there lies buried in the sands on the southern coast the hull of the famous tortoise boat with which Admiral Yi Sun-sin won his famous naval battles over the Japanese, and Ensign George C. Foulk of the American navy, who was making a trip in southern Korea at the time of the *émeute* of 1884, told the writer that the remains of a boat were pointed out to him as being the authentic "tortoise boat." This was of course another case of vivid imagination on the part of the Koreans. It may be that there is more truth in the statement that in the storehouse of the old fortress of Namhan there lies the original mortar which the Koreans invented to throw bombs into the Japanese forts. The story of the invention of this weapon is told in all good faith, and the records say that when it was fired the whole thing leaped over the wall and fell among the Japanese soldiers; and when they crowded around to see what it was, it exploded and destroyed a score of men. It seems clear that they had some sort of weapon resembling the bomb and mortar, and if so they may have been the first inventors of it.

It is said that there is a cave about thirty miles south of Seoul called "The Death Cave." In the days of the great invasion, three centuries ago, about a thousand Koreans took refuge in this place, but the Japanese built a huge fire at its mouth and suffocated them all. Since that time no Korean has ever ventured into the cave for fear of the spirits of the dead.

Many questions have been asked about the tombs in which golden-coffined kings lie, and which the vandal Oppert came to rob in 1867. The Koreans say that Oppert and his crew were friends of the Roman Catholic priests who had been killed here the preceding year, and that Oppert came to rifle the grave of the father of the regent in revenge. This was not true. The expedition was a purely predatory one, and the object of it was to find the gold and treasure that were supposed to lie in the tombs on Tabong Mountain. The amusing thing about it is that these are not royal graves, but merely the place where,

according to immemorial custom, the placentæ of royal births have been buried. The writer had a conversation in 1887 with an old man in Nagasaki who had formed one of this expedition, and he corroborated the statement of the Koreans that a heavy and unusual fog hung over the country on that day and prevented the carrying out of the plan. Such a powerful impression did this outrage make upon the Koreans that they composed a popular song about it which says:

Yanggukeui chajin angă
Wheanpong tora deunda.
The thick fog of the Westerners
Broods over Whean Peak.

CHAPTER XXII

LANGUAGE

THE Korean language belongs to that widely disseminated family to which the term Turanian has been applied. This term is sufficiently indefinite to match the subject, for scholarship has not determined with any degree of exactitude the limits of its dispersion. At its widest reach it includes Turkish, Hungarian, Basque, Lappish, Finnish, Ouigour, Ostiak, Samoiyed, Mordwin, Manchu, Mongol and the other Tartar and Siberian dialects, Japanese, Korean, Tamil, Telugu, Canarese, Malayalam and the other Dravidian dialects, Malay and a great number of the Polynesian and Australian dialects. It reaches northward along the coast of Asia, through the Philippine Islands and Formosa, and south and east into New Guinea, New Hebrides and Australia.

The main point which differentiates this whole family of languages from the Aryan tongues is the agglutinative principle by which declension and conjugation are effected through the addition of postpositions and suffixes, and not by modification of the stem. In all these different languages the stem of the word remains, as a rule, intact through every form of grammatical manipulation. That Korean belongs to this family of languages is seen in its strictly agglutinative character. There has been no deviation from this principle. There are no exceptions. Any typical Korean verb can be conjugated through its thousand different forms without finding the least change in the stem of the word. A comparison of Korean with Manchu discloses at once a family likeness, and at the same time a comparison of Korean with the Dravidian dialects discloses a still closer kinship. It is an interesting fact that none of the Chinese dialects possess any of the distinctive features of this Turanian

family. There is more similarity between Chinese and English than between Chinese and any of the Turanian languages. In other words, China has been even more thoroughly isolated linguistically than she has socially, and the evidence goes to prove that at some period enormously remote, after the original Chinese had effected an entrance into the mighty amphitheatre, between the central Asian mountains on the one hand and the waters of the Pacific on the other, they were surrounded by a subsequent race who impinged upon them at every point, and conquered them more than once, but who never succeeded in leaving a single trace upon their unique and primitive language. This surrounding family was the Turanian, and Korean forms one link in the chain.

Korean bears almost precisely the same relation to Chinese that English does to Latin. English has retained its own distinct grammatical structure while drawing an immense number of words from the Romance dialects for purposes of embellishment and precision. The same holds true of Korean. She has never surrendered a single point to Chinese grammar, and yet has borrowed largely from the Chinese glossary as convenience or necessity has required. Chinese may be called the Latin of the Far East. For, just as Rome through her higher civilisation lent thousands of words to the semi-savages hovering along her borders, so China has furnished all the surrounding peoples with their scientific, legal, philosophical and religious terminology. The development of Chinese grammar was early checked by the influence of the ideograph, and so she never has had anything to lend her neighbours in the way of superior grammatical inflection.

The grammars of Korea and Japan are practically identical, and yet, strange to say, with the exception of the words they have both borrowed from China, their glossaries are remarkably dissimilar. This forms one of the most obscure philological problems of the Far East. The identity in grammatical structure, however, stamps them as sister languages.

The study of Korean grammar is rendered interesting by the fact that in the surrounding of China by Turanian peoples Korea forms the place where the two surrounding branches met and completed the circuit. Northern Korea was settled from the north by Turanian people, and southern Korea was settled from the south by Turanian people. It was not until 193 B. C. that each became definitely aware of the presence of the other. At first they refused to acknowledge the relationship, but the fact that, when in 690 A. D. the southern kingdom of Silla assumed control of the whole peninsula, there remained no such line of social cleavage as that which obtained between the English and Normans after 1066, shows that an intrinsic similarity of language and a similar racial aptitude quickly closed the breach and made Korea the unit that she is to-day.

Korean is an agglutinative, polysyllabic language whose development is marvellously complete and symmetrical. We find no such long lists of exceptions as those which entangle the student of the Indo-European languages. In Korean as in most of the Turanian languages the idea of gender is very imperfectly developed, which argues perhaps a lack of imagination. The ideas of person and number are largely left to the context for determination, but in the matter of logical sequence the Korean verb is carried to the extreme of development.

The Korean's keen sense of social distinctions has given rise to a complete system of honorifics whose proper application is essential to a right use of the language. And yet numerous as these may be, their use is so regulated by unwritten law, and there are so few exceptions that they are far easier to master than the personal terminations of Indo-European verbs. The grammatical superiority of Korean over many of the Western languages is that while, in the latter, differences of gender, number and person which would usually be perfectly clear from the context are carefully noted, in the Korean these are left to the speaker's and the hearer's perspicacity, and attention is concentrated upon a terse and luminous collocation of

ideas, which is often secured in the West only by a tedious circumlocution.

The genius of the language has led the Korean to express every possible verbal relation by a separate modal form. The extent to which this has been carried may be shown only by illustration. Besides having simple forms to express the different tenses and modes, it also has forms to express all those more delicate verbal relations which in English require a circumlocution or the free use of adverbs. For instance, the Korean has a special mode to express the idea of necessity, contingency, surprise, reproof, antithesis, conjunction, temporal sequence, logical sequence, interruption, duration, limit, acquiescence, expostulation, interrogation, promise, exhortation, imprecation, desire, doubt, hypothesis, satisfaction, propriety, concession, intention, decision, probability, possibility, prohibition, simultaneity, continuity, repetition, infrequency, hearsay, agency, contempt, ability. Each one of these ideas can be expressed in connection with any active verb by the simple addition of one or more inseparable suffixes. By far the greater number of these suffixes are monosyllabic.

To illustrate the delicate shades of thought that can be expressed by the use of a suffix let us take the English expression, "I was going along the road, when suddenly —" This, without anything more, implies that the act of going was suddenly interrupted by some unforeseen circumstance. All this would be expressed in Korean by the three words *naga kile kataga.* The first means "I," the second means "along the road," and the third means "was going, when suddenly —" The stem of the verb is *ka,* and the ending, *taga,* indicates the interruption of the action. And what is more to the point, this ending has absolutely no other use. It is reserved solely for the expression of this shade of thought. Again, on the same stem we have the word *kalka,* in which the ending *ka* gives all the meaning that we connote in the expression, "I wonder whether he will really go or not." If, in answer to the question whether you are going

or not you say simply *kana,* it means, "What in the world would I be going for? Absurd!"

Another thing which differentiates Korean from the languages of the West is the difference between "book language" and "spoken language." Many grammatical forms are common to both, but there are also many in each that are not found in the other. The result is extremely unfortunate, for no conversation can be written down *verbatim;* it must all be changed into book language. This fact is probably due to Chinese influence, and it is but one of the ways in which that influence acted as a drag upon Korean intellectual development. I would not belittle the enormous debt that Korea owes to China, but some of her gifts had been better ungiven. None of these endings are borrowed from the Chinese language, but as Korea had practically no literature before Chinese influence led up to it, it was inevitable that certain endings should be reserved for the formal language of books, while others were considered good enough only to be bandied from mouth to mouth. It is of course impossible to say what sort of a literature Korea would have evolved had she been left to herself, but one thing is sure; it would have been much more spontaneous and lifelike than that which now obtains.

Korean has no dialects. There are different brogues, and a Seoul man can generally detect by a man's speech from what province he comes; but it would be wide of the truth to assert that Koreans from any part of the country could not readily understand each other. There are some few words that are peculiar to particular provinces, but for the most part these are mutually known, just as the four words "guess," "reckon," "allow" and "calculate," while peculiar in a certain sense to particular sections of America, are universally understood.

No people have followed more implicitly nature's law in the matter of euphony. The remarkable law of the convertibility of surds and sonants has been worked out to its ultimate results in this language. The nice adjustment of the organs of speech, whereby conflicting sounds are so modified as to blend harmoni-

ously, is one of the unconscious Korean arts. The euphonic tendency has not broken down the languages, as is sometimes the case. Prof. Max Müller speaks of a law of phonetic decay, but in Korea it would be better called the law of phonetic adjustment. Korean is characterised by a large number of mimetic words. As their colours are drawn directly from nature, so their words are often merely phonetic descriptions.

The Korean language is eminently adapted for public speaking. It is a sonorous, vocal language. They have grasped the idea that the vowel is the basis of all human speech. The sibilant element is far less conspicuous than in Japanese, and one needs only to hear a public speech in Japanese and one in Korean to discover the great advantage which the latter enjoys. The lack of all accent in Japanese words is a serious drawback to oratory. There is nothing in Korean speech that makes it less adapted to oratory than English or any other Western tongue. In common with the language of Cicero or Demosthenes, Korean is composed of periodic sentences, each one reaching its climax in the verb which is usually the final word, and there are no weakening *addenda* which so often make the English sentence an anticlimax. In this respect the Korean surpasses English as a medium of public speaking.

CHAPTER XXIII

LITERATURE

JUST as Korea and China have a very high moral standard that they never even pretend to live up to, so each of these countries has the utmost regard for literature, while all the time the common people are grossly illiterate. Both morals and literature have gone to seed, and we much fear the seeds are not fertile. The Chinese character possesses a certain hypnotic power which it exercises in varying degree upon everyone who acquires a smattering of it. It can be proved to a certainty that this character is a most cumbersome and unscientific affair so far as being a medium for the acquisition of actual knowledge is concerned. No one dare deny that it stands like a stumbling-block in the path of general education throughout the Far East, and yet almost every foreigner who acquires a modicum of it becomes so enamoured of it that he is unwilling to see it laid aside for some system which will make the vast range of human knowledge accessible to the masses of these countries. The tens of thousands of characters which form the written language of China are a wonderful mosaic which has been built up during thousands of years, so that if anyone once gets the key to it the mere etymological study, irrespective of positive and useful intellectual results, is almost irresistibly fascinating. While the process by which this system has been built up appears to have followed certain general laws, yet the divergences and exceptions have been so many and so great that in the acquisition of a knowledge of them memory alone seems to be required. All sorts of methods have been devised whereby foreigners can acquire the Chinese character with facility, but it is much to be doubted whether they are any better than the method in use in

Korea and China for the last two or three thousand years; namely, to memorize them one after the other without regard to similarity of shape or sound. In the last analysis it comes to a matter of pure memory, and the antipodal character of the methods which have been devised to make it easy shows that such attempts are largely futile. The excessive use of the memory in the learning of the mere shapes of the characters has a deadening effect upon the purely ratiocinative faculty. This is evidenced in the very character of Chinese and Korean literature. Historical narrative of the baldest kind, without any attempt to generalise, holds a most conspicuous place. In the West the historian analyses the material which historical records put in his hands; he searches for the causes of things, and frequently epitomises the salient features of a whole era in a few sentences. Such a thing as this is absolutely unknown in the dusty annals of the Far East. The scientific ability to deduce principles from mere statements of historical fact seems to have been utterly adumbrated. In his poetry the Korean is hampered rather than helped by the character. A large part of his effort is expended in the nice balancing of characters with reference to their sound, just as if a Western poet were to consider rhyme, assonance and alliteration the main elements of true poetry. And yet it must be confessed that the character has had a less deleterious effect upon the poetical faculty than upon the logical.

It may be said with considerable truth that the whole literature of Korea, as of China, is history and *belles lettres*. The practical side of life is hardly touched upon. To be sure, there are countless aphorisms, and moral essays of an academic character are most common, but these in their practical bearing on the Chinese or Korean mind are no more than mere polite literature, and are always perused as such.

As for scientific literature, the government now and again publishes a ponderous work in a score of volumes on some subject like farming, astronomy, medicine or law. A few wealthy gentlemen and officials can afford to secure a copy, but as for practical

use by the people, these works are utterly worthless, and would be so even if the contents were unimpeachable, — which is probably far from the case.

To make a very long matter short, the literatures of Korea and of China have a backward look. Imitation of past writings is the highest excellence to be achieved. Not only is there no such thing as originality, but the very word itself is wanting, and if the idea were expressed by a circumlocution it would be laughed at. To what extent the Chinese character is responsible for this state of things is a moot question, but I believe that it is one of the main causes of the backward condition of these peoples. The art of imitation dominates literature, art, dress, morals and everything else. Ask a man thoroughly conversant with these countries whether it is not true that when you have seen a single Chinese temple you have really seen them all, when you have heard one piece of music you have heard them all, when you have seen one good sample of cloisonné you have seen them all, when you have seen one sample of embroidery you have seen them all. In this arraignment Japan must be excepted, for she has received a new impetus along artistic lines through the demand of foreign trade. But I dare say that the true Japanese connoisseur to-day would by far prefer the simple and pure forms of earlier Japanese art to the more modern departures.

Korean literature, the more celebrated portions of which are all in the Chinese character, consists of voluminous histories, some of them running into several scores of volumes, the Chinese classics, founded on the Confucian code, *belles lettres* proper, consisting of what the Koreans vaguely call *keul*, or " writing," the nature of it being supposedly poetic, a few heavy works on medicine, geography (native), law and government, and finally, a large number of biographies. Each family of note will have its history transcribed in volume after volume. Many of these are in manuscript, waiting for the time when some member of the family shall attain wealth and be able to have the work published for circulation throughout the clan.

We see, then, that quite a list of Korean books could be gotten together, but the trouble is that very few Koreans can afford to possess them. The ordinary gentleman may have half a dozen works of various kinds, but it is only here and there that one of them will have what we could call a library. And right here comes in a most marked peculiarity of this people. While they are very open-handed with their money, as a rule, yet in the matter of books they are the utmost misers. I know personally of a number of well-stocked libraries in Seoul, but it is absolutely impossible even to get a look at them. Not only will the owner not lend a book, but he will not show one to a visitor except under the most unusual circumstances. They do well not to lend, but it is one of the most difficult traits of the Korean to explain, — this extreme unwillingness even to show a book at his own house. It is easy to see, therefore, that the cause of general reading is badly handicapped. There are no public libraries, except those in Seoul, which handle fiction in the native character, and many of the really valuable works are so voluminous that very few can afford to purchase. Let me illustrate. One of the really valuable books is the Mun-hon Pi-go, an encyclopædia in one hundred and twelve volumes. This work is nearly as well known by name in Korea as the Britannica is in England or America, and yet I have never discovered more than three copies of it in the country. I worked for months to secure even a look at one, and it was only the sudden collapse of a wealthy family which threw a copy on the market and gave the opportunity to buy. Even then it was a matter of considerable diplomacy. There are half-a-dozen of the leading Korean works that I have never been able to set eyes upon even after years of inquiry and search.

When we come to the matter of fiction, we find that the imagination of the Korean was not to be held completely in check even by the iron grasp of Chinese ideals.

FICTION

To say that Korea has never produced a great novelist is true, if we mean by a novelist a person who makes his life-work the writing of fiction and bases his literary reputation thereon. But if, on the other hand, a man who in the midst of graver literary work turns aside to write a successful novel may be called a novelist, then Korea has produced a goodly number of them. If the word "novel" is restricted to a work of fiction developed in great detail and covering a certain minimum number of pages, Korea cannot be said to possess many novels, but if a work of fiction covering as much ground as, say, Dickens' "Christmas Carol" may be called a novel, Korea has thousands of them.

The literary history of Korea opened in the seventh century of our era. The great scholar Ch'oe Chi-wun was the Korean Chaucer, and he was one of the very few Koreans whose writings have been widely recognised outside the confines of the peninsula. But even at the very dawn of letters we find that he wrote and published a complete novel under the name "Adventures among the Kuen-lun Mountains." It is a fanciful account of a Korean's ramblings among the great mountains in southern China. The same writer also produced a volume of poems and stories. Many of the latter were of a length to merit at least the name of novelette. At about the same time another writer, Kim Am, wrote a story of adventure in Japan, which was quite long enough to be called a novel.

Kim Pu-sik, the greatest of the Koryu writers, to whom we owe the standard History of the Three Kingdoms, wrote a complete novel in one volume, called "The Story of the Long North Wall." This may be called an historical novel, for Korea once boasted a counterpart to the Great Wall of China, extending from the Yellow Sea to the Japan Sea across the whole of northern Korea.

About 1440 the celebrated monk Ka-san wrote "The Adventures of Hong Kil-dong," and another monk, Ha Jong, wrote

"The Adventures of Kyong-op." Coming down to more modern times, we might mention the novel of Yi Mun-jong, written about 1760, and bearing the Aristophanean title of "The Frogs." Then there were "The Praise of Virtue and Righteousness," "Nine Men's Dreams," "A Dream at Keum-san Monastery," "The Adventures of Yi Ha-ryong," "The Golden Jewel," "The Story of a Clever Woman," "The Adventures of Sir Rabbit" and many others.

While many of these novels place the scene of the story in Korea, others go far afield, China being a favourite setting for many purely Korean stories. In this the Koreans have but followed the example of writers in other lands, as the works of Bulwer Lytton, Kingsley, Scott and a host of others bear witness.

These that we have mentioned are written in Chinese characters, but Korea is also filled with fiction written only in the native character. Nominally these tales are despised by the literary class, which forms a small fraction of the people, but in reality there are very few even of this class who are not thoroughly conversant with the contents of these novels. They are on sale in every bookstore in the country, and in Seoul alone there are several circulating libraries where novels both in Chinese and in pure Korean are found by the hundreds. Many, in fact most, of these novels are anonymous, their character being such that they would hardly reflect credit upon their writers. And yet, however discreditable they may be, they are a true mirror of the morals of Korea to-day.

The customs which prevail in Korea, as in every other Oriental country, make it out of the question for anyone to produce a "love story" in our sense of the term; but as the relations of the sexes, here as elsewhere, are of absorbing interest, we find some explanation of the salacious character of many Korean novels. Just as the names of Aspasia and other *hetairai* play such an important part in a certain class of Greek literature, so the *kisang*, or dancing-girl, trips through the pages of Korean fiction.

There remains here in full force that ancient custom which antedates the printing of books, — of handing down stories by word of mouth. If a gentleman of means wants to "read" a novel, he does not ordinarily send out to a book-stall and buy one, but he sends for a *kwang-da*, or professional story-teller, who comes with his attendant and drum and recites a story, often consuming an entire day or even two days in the recital. Is there any radical difference between this and the novel? In truth, it far excels our novel as an artistic production, for the trained accent and intonation of the reciter add an histrionic element that is quite lacking when one merely reads a novel. This form of recital takes the place of the drama in Korea; for, strange as it may seem, while both China and Japan have cultivated the histrionic art for ages, Koreans have never attempted it.

Fiction in Korea has always taken a lower place than other literary productions, poetry and history being considered the two great branches of literature. This is true of all countries whose literatures have been largely influenced by China. The use of the Chinese character has always made it impossible to write as people speak. The vernacular and the written speech have always been widely different, and it has always been impossible to write a conversation as it is spoken. This in itself is a serious obstacle to the proper development of fiction as an art, for when the possibility of accurately transcribing a conversation is taken away, the life and vigour of a story are largely lost. Dialect stories and character sketches are practically barred. And besides this, subserviency of Chinese literary ideals to the historical and poetical forms has made these people cast their fiction also in these forms; and so we often find that a genuine romance is hidden under such a title as "The Biography of Cho Sang-geun," or some other equally tame. It is this limitation of the power of written language to transcribe accurately human speech that has resulted in the survival of the professional story-teller, and it is the same thing that has made Korean written fiction inferior

and secondary to history and poetry. In this, as in so many other things, Korea shows the evil effects of her subserviency to Chinese ideals.

But the question may be asked, To what extent is fiction read in Korea as compared with other literary productions? There is a certain small number of the people who probably confine their reading to history and poetry, but even among the so-called educated classes the large majority have such a rudimentary knowledge of the Chinese character that they cannot read with any degree of fluency. There is no doubt that these confine their reading to the mixed script of the daily newspaper or the novels written in the native character. It is commonly said that women are the greatest readers of these native books. This is because the men affect to despise the native alphabet, but the truth is that an overwhelming majority, even of the supposedly literate, can read nothing else with any degree of fluency, and so they and the middle classes are constant readers of the native books. As in America, so in Korea the newspapers and novels form the greater part of the literary pabulum of the masses.

It is a hopeful sign that there is nothing about this native alphabet or writing that prevents its being used as idiomatically and to as good effect as English is used in fiction to-day; and it is to be hoped that the time will soon come when someone will do for Korea what Defoe and other pioneers did for English fiction, namely, write a standard work of fiction in the popular tongue.

CHAPTER XXIV

MUSIC AND POETRY

IN spite of the evidence to the contrary borne to our ears on every summer breeze, Korean music is not a myth. The sounds seem peculiar and far from pleasing, because we do not bring to them the Korean temperament and training, but the more artificial Western ear. We complain because they do not "keep time"; but why should they? There is no analogy for it in nature. The thrush does not "keep time," and the skylark, that joy of Korean waste places, knows nothing of art. It is a question whether music, as a pure expression of feeling, should be hampered by "time" any more than poetry should be hampered by rhyme. There are times when both rhyme and time are necessary adjuncts, and even Korean music frequently shows a rhythmic succession of notes which closely approximates to what we call "time."

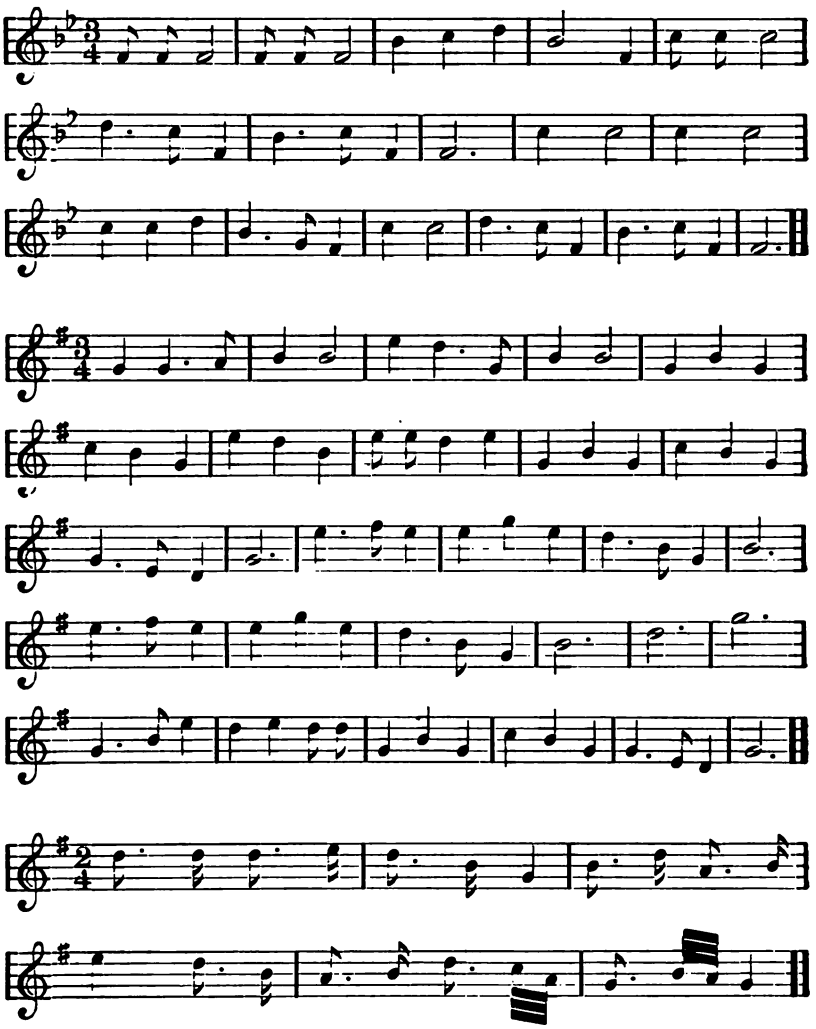
Koreans like our music as little as we like theirs, and for the same reason. It means nothing to them. Our harmonies seem to them like a veritable jargon of sounds, but they take genuine pleasure in that indescribable medley of thumps and squeaks which emanate from a Korean orchestra. To us it seems as if there were no rhyme or reason in it, but in truth every note is produced according to a fixed law. There is a distinct science of music here that has been in existence for upwards of fifteen hundred years. Every note and cadence is produced according to a specific law. It only illustrates what is true of all art, that we must bring to it a trained sense in order to appreciate it.

Each of the Korean musical instruments has a long history back of it. The *komungo* may be described as a long, narrow bass viol without any neck. It lies upon the floor, and the player plucks the strings with his right hand while he "fingers" them with his left hand near the "bridge." In other words, he reverses the method which we adopt and plucks where we would finger and fingers where we would bow. The result is not particularly edifying, but they have never learned, even during nearly seventeen hundred years, that they are playing at the wrong end of the instrument. This *komungo* dates from the days of ancient Silla, and history takes particular pains to describe its origin. The flute is commonly used in Korea, but it differs in shape from ours. If a Western flute were sawed in two through the mouth hole, it would approximate to the Korean instrument. It is held squarely against the mouth, the lower lip of the performer closing the open end of the tube while he blows down into the semicircular hole. Of all the Korean instruments this sounds most like our Western ones. The flute is also a very ancient instrument, for we read in history of a jade flute that formed one of the heirlooms of the Silla dynasty nearly two thousand years ago. The curious story is told of it that if carried to any other place than the town of Kyong-ju, the site of the ancient Silla, it would emit no sound whatever. Koreans firmly believe that it is still preserved among the archives of that southern town. The *hageum*, or violin, looks like a large croquet mallet with a short handle; moreover, the head is hollow. The strings, two in number, are stretched from the head to the end of the handle, where they are fastened to a spool-like peg. The hair of the bow is interlaced between the strings of the violin, and the fingering is done by throwing the thumb around the "handle" and then hooking one or other of the fingers over the strings. The result is anything but edifying, and it is safe to say that this instrument must have existed many centuries to have taken the hold it has upon the affections of the Korean people. They have a species of zither,

which has the peculiarity of being triple-strung, like our modern pianos. It is struck with a sliver of bamboo. One ancient form of instrument consists of a set of metal bangles, which are struck as we strike a triangle. This is a very ancient instrument, but there was an interval of several centuries when not a single sample of it could be found in the country. Only historical notices remained; when fortunately, or otherwise, one of them was found at the bottom of a well which was being cleaned. This is something of a commentary upon the frequency with which the latter operation is performed. The drum has existed here from of old. It takes various forms, and is very commonly used instead of a bell. In the town of Taiku a huge drum is used for this purpose. It is larger than a full-sized hogshead. When used for music, the drum varies in size from one foot in diameter to three; but there are various forms, — the kettle-drum and the hour-glass variety, the latter being struck only with the hand. Strange to say, this hour-glass drum is almost the only instrument used as an accompaniment for singing.

Vocal music is divided into two distinct classes, — the *sijo,* or classical style, and the *hach'i,* or popular style. The former of these may be described as extremely *andante* and *tremuloso,* and it is frequently punctuated by the drum. The progress of such a piece is very slow and dignified, and the length of time that a single note is sometimes held makes one wonder whether the singer will succeed in getting another breath. The Koreans say that it requires long and patient practice to render a classical production well. We can well believe this, considering the time it takes to get used to listening to it. It is sung to perfection only by the professional dancing-girls; not because the sentiments are more properly expressed by them than by more respectable people, though this is too often the case, but because they are the only ones who have the leisure to give to its cultivation. To the Westerner there is nothing pleasing in this style of singing. It is one succession of long-drawn-out tremu-

lous notes with no appreciable melody. The popular style, however, is comparatively like our own singing, and through many of the songs there runs a distinct melody which can be reduced to the Western musical score. The element of "time" has been considerably developed, and one can follow the air with ease. The following are samples of a few of the most popular motifs in Korean popular songs:



The Koreans are very fond of music, and the children on the street are always singing. On a summer evening they will gather in little companies and sing in unison their queer little "Mother Goose" melodies. Each one shouts at the top of his or her voice, and at a little distance the effect is not disagreeable. The commonest of all these songs, and one that is familiar to every child in Korea, begins as follows:

> **On Saijai's slope, in Mungyung town**
> **We hew the *paktal namu* down**
> **To make the smooth and polished clubs**
> **With which the washerwoman drubs**
> **Her master's clothes.**

And then follows a chorus which has about as much sense as our own classical

> **Hei diddle diddle, the cat and the fiddle.**

This song has innumerable verses, and can be indefinitely extended by clever improvisation.

In the spring, when the grasses and rushes are beginning to grow, almost every child will have his little reed whistle, just as American boys have their willow whistles, but the Korean instrument is quite different from ours. It is made on the principle of the flageolet. Two of the reeds are usually tied together so that a double note is produced.

One of the most characteristic Korean sounds is that of a very shrill, cornet-like instrument, which drones out a weird minor strain of a summer evening. No Westerner will ever quite understand why the Korean takes such pleasure in the monotonous but strident note of this implement of torture.

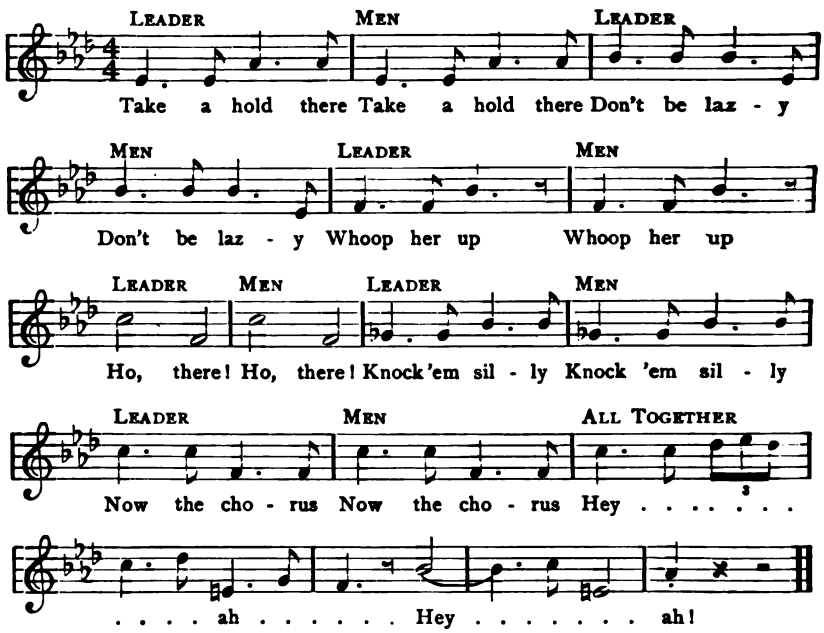
Music is considered one of the lesser arts, not only in Korea but also in China. As a profession, music occupies much the same position here that ballet-dancing does in the West. The best that can be said of it is that it is not necessarily disreputable. There are no professional singers in Korea, except the

dancing-girls, and they cultivate music merely to enhance their meretricious charms. These people have never conceived of music as a great moral force; it has always been counted as merely an instrument of sensual pleasure, and as such has been classed with dancing, drinking and debauchery. It is for this reason that common music is denominated *chap-doen sorai*, "low down noise," by respectable people, and only one song in ten could with decency be published.

These people have a sort of musical notation which differs radically from ours. It has no staff and no notes, but simply a string of Chinese characters which indicate in some occult manner the various cadences. If we were to attempt a comparison with the Western method, we might say that it is like reducing the tune "Yankee Doodle" to the form *do do re mi do mi re si do do re mi do si sol,* etc.

We must not forget the Korean labour songs, which form, to the Western ear, the most charming portion of Korean music. The peculiar and elusive rhythm of these songs is quite unique in its way. It captures the ear, and you find yourself humming it over to yourself *ad nauseam.* It is a curious psychological study. Throughout the East there is a lack of the personal element. Individuality is adumbrated, and men count themselves not so much integral factors of society as mere fractions of a social whole. The unit of society is not the individual nor even the family, but it is the clan, the company, the crowd. Thus in their work they band together and accomplish tasks by the multiplication of muscle. This necessitates a rhythmic motion, in order that force may be applied at the same instant by every arm. Each band of ten or twelve workers has its leader, whose only duty is to conduct the chorus. He stands at one side and chants a strain of four syllables, and immediately the men take it up and repeat it after him. No work is done while he is singing, but as the men take up the chant they all heave together. It seems a great waste of time, but it would be very difficult to get Koreans to do certain forms of work in any

other way. The following indicates very imperfectly a Korean labour song:



The leader uses mostly a certain set formula, but now and again he will improvise in a most amusing way, to the great delight of the men. They all seem to be in good humour, and are apparently able to make their work seem like play.

In connection with music we must take up the subject of Korean poetry, since this forms the subject matter of their vocal music.

Dialect stories are interesting because of their raciness, due to oddities of idiom and pronunciation; but these peculiarities are not felt, of course, by the people of whom it is the ordinary mode of speech. The humour of most dialect stories is of that low order which rests simply upon incongruity. So it is that we are sometimes deceived when it comes to the poetry of other peoples, or even to the life, customs and manners of other

peoples. When a Korean says to you, "Is not the great man's stomach empty?" it makes you smile, whereas to him it means simply, "Are n't you hungry?"

This is my reason for rejecting all literal translations of Korean poetry. Such translations would not convey to us the same sensation that the original does to the Korean; and, after all, that is what we are primarily after. The first difficulty lies in the fact that Korean poetry is so condensed. A half-dozen Chinese characters, if properly collocated, may convey more meaning than a whole paragraph in English. One song, for instance, states the matter as baldly as this:

This month, third month, willow becomes green;
Oriole preens herself;
Butterfly flutters about.
Boy, bring zither. Must sing.

It cannot be said that this means nothing to us, but the bald translation conveys nothing of the feeling which the Korean experiences when he sees the original. If I have at least partially caught the inner sense of it, the following would better represent what it means to the Korean:

The willow catkin bears the vernal blush of summer's dawn
When winter's night is done.
The oriole that preens herself aloft on swaying bough
Is summer's harbinger.
The butterfly, with noiseless *fŭl-fŭl* of her pulsing wing,
Marks off the summer hour.
Quick, boy! My zither! Do its strings accord? 'T is well. Strike up,
For I *must* sing.

Another purely Korean poem that would appear utterly insipid to the uninitiated might be rendered freely:

O mountain blue,
Be thou my oracle. Thou stumbling-block to clouds,
Years have not marred thee nor thine eye of memory dimmed.
Past, present, future seem to find eternal throne
Upon thy legend-haunted crest. O mountain blue,
Be thou my oracle.

O mountain blue,
Deliver up thy lore. Tell me, this hour, the name
Of him, most worthy — be he child, or man, or sage —
Who 'neath thy summit, hailed to-morrow, wrestled with
To-day or reached out memory's hands toward yesterday.
Deliver up thy lore.

O mountain blue,
Be thou my cenotaph; and when, long ages hence,
Some youth, presumptuous, shall again thy secret guess,
Thy lips unseal, among the names of them who claim
The guerdon of thy praise, I pray let mine appear.
Be thou my cenotaph.

Here we have a purely Korean picture — a youth on his way to attend the national examination, his life before him. He has stopped to rest on the slope of one of the grand mountains of Korea, and he thinks of all that must have trodden that same path to honours and success; and as he gazes up at the rock-ribbed giant, the spirit of poetry seizes him and he demands of the mountain who these successful ones may be. Between the second and third verses we imagine him fallen asleep and the mountain telling him in his dreams the long story of those worthy ones. As the youth awakes and resumes his journey, he looks up and asks that his name may be added to that list. In what more delicate or subtle way could he ask the genius of the mountain to follow him and bring him success?

There is another song that may be placed in that much maligned category of "Spring poems," whose deprecation nets the comic papers such a handsome sum.

The Korean is your true lover of springtime. The harshness of his winter is mitigated by no glowing hearth or cosey chimney-corner. Winter means to him a dungeon, twelve by eight, dark, dirty, poisonous. Spring means to him emancipation, breathing space, pure pleasure, — animal pleasure, if you will, — but the touch of spring affects him to the finger-tips and makes his senses "stir with poetry as leaves with summer wind." He is simply irrepressible. He *must* have song.

One branch of Korean classical music deals with convivial songs. This looks somewat paradoxical, but if Hogarth's paintings are classical, a convivial song may be.

'T was years ago that Kim and I
Struck hands and swore, however dry
The lip might be, or sad the heart,
The merry wine should have no part
In mitigating sorrow's blow
Or quenching thirst. 'T was long ago.

And now I 've reached the flood-tide mark
Of life; the ebb begins, and dark
The future lowers. The tide of wine
Will never ebb. 'T will aye be mine
To mourn the desecrated fane
Where that lost pledge of youth lies slain.

Nay, nay, begone! The jocund bowl
Again shall bolster up my soul
Against itself. What, good-man, hold!
Canst tell me where red wine is sold?
Nay, just beyond yon peach-tree? There?
Good luck be thine; I 'll thither fare.

We have here first the memory of the lost possibilities of youth; then the realisation of to-day's slavery, and, lastly, the mad rush to procure that which alone will bring forgetfulness. Not an exclusively Korean picture, surely.

In central Korea there is a lofty precipice overlooking a little lakelet. It is called " The Precipice of the Falling Flowers," and I venture to say that, with no other evidence at hand than this, the reader would be compelled to grant that Koreans have genuine poetic feeling in them, for the story is something as follows:

In Pakche's halls is heard a sound of woe.
The craven King, with prescience of his fate,
Has fled, by all his warrior knights encinct.
Nor wizard's art nor reeking sacrifice
Nor martial host can stem the tidal wave
Of Silla's vengeance. Flight, the coward's boon,
Is his; but by his flight his Queen is worse

Than widowed; left a prey to war's caprice,
The invader's insult and the conqueror's jest.
Silent she sits among her trembling maids,
Whose loud lament and clam'rous grief bespeak
Their anguish less than hers. But lo! She smiles,
And, beckoning with her hand, she leads them forth
Without the wall, as when in days of peace
They held high holiday in nature's haunts.
But now behind them sounds the horrid din
Of ruthless war, and on they speed to where
A beetling precipice frowns ever at
Itself within the mirror of a pool
By spirits haunted. Now the steep is scaled.
With flashing eye and heaving breast she turns
And kindles thus heroic flame where erst
Were ashes of despair. "Th' insulting foe
Has boasted loud that he will cull the flowers
Of Pakche. Let him learn his boast is vain;
For never shall they say that Pakche's Queen
Was less than queenly. Lo! The spirits wait
In yon dark pool. Though deep the abyss and harsh
Death's summons, we shall fall into their arms
As on a bed of down and pillow there
Our heads in conscious innocence." This said,
She leads them to the brink. Hand clasped in hand,
In sisterhood of woe; an instant thus—
Then forth into the void they leap, brave hearts!
Like drifting petals of the plum, soft blown
By April's perfumed breath, so fell the flowers
Of Pakche; but in falling rose aloft
To honour's pinnacle.

The Korean delights in introducing poetical allusions into his folk-tales. It is only a line here and there, for his poetry is nothing if not spontaneous. He sings like the bird, because he cannot help it. One of the best of this style is the story of Cho-ung, who, after nailing to the palace gate his defiance of the usurper of his master's throne, fled to a distant monastery, and after mastering the science of war, came forth to destroy that usurper. The first day he became possessed in a marvellous way of a sword and a steed, and at night, still clad in his monk's garments, he enjoyed the hospitality of a country gentleman. As he stands at the window of his chamber, looking out upon

the moonlit scene, he hears the sound of a zither, which must be touched by fairy fingers; for though no words are sung, the music interprets itself.

Sad heart, sad heart, thou waitest long,
  For love's deep fountain thirsting.
Must winter linger in my soul,
  Tho' April's buds are bursting?

The forest deep, at love's behest,
  His heart of oak hath riven,
This lodge to rear, where I might greet
  My hero, fortune-driven.

But heartless fortune, mocking me,
  My knight far hence hath banished;
And sends, instead, this cowl-drawn monk,
  From whom love's hope hath vanished.

This throbbing zither I have ta'en
  To speed my heart's fond message;
To call from heaven the *Wonang* bird,
  Love's sign and joy's sure presage.

But fate, mid-heaven, hath caged the bird
  That, only, love's note utters;
And in its stead a magpie foul
  Into my bosom flutters.

Piqued at this equivocal praise, Cho-ung draws out his flute, his constant companion, and answers his unseen critic in notes that plainly mean:

Ten years, among the halls of learning, I have shunned
The shrine of love, life's synonym; and dreamt, vain youth,
That having conquered nature's secrets I could wrest
From life its crowning jewel, love. 'T was not to be.
To-night I hear a voice from some far sphere that bids
The lamp of love to burn, forsooth, but pours no oil
Into its chalice. Woe is me; full well I know
There is no bridge that spans the gulf from earth to heaven.
E'en though I deem her queen in yon fair moon enthroned,
The nearest of her kin, can I breathe soft enough
Into this flute to make earth silence hold that she
May hear; or shrill so loud to pierce the firmament
And force the ear of night?

However that may be, he solved the difficulty by leaping over the mud wall that separated them and gained her promise to become his wife, which promise she fulfilled after he had led an army against the usurper and driven him from the throne.

Korean poetry is all of a lyric nature. There is nothing in the nature of an epic. The language does not lend itself to that form of expression. It is all nature music, pure and simple. It is all passion, sensibility, emotion. It deals with personal, domestic, even trivial matters oftentimes, and for this reason it may be called narrow. But we must remember that their horizon is pitifully circumscribed. If they lavish a world of passion on a trivial matter, it is because in their small world these things are relatively great. The swaying of a willow bough, the erratic flight of a butterfly, the falling of a petal, the droning of a passing bee, means more to a Korean, perhaps, than to one whose life is broader.

Here we have the fisherman's song as he returns from his work at night:

As darts the sun his setting rays
  Athwart the shimmering mere,
My fishing-line reluctantly
  I furl and homeward steer.

Far out along the foam-tipped waves
  The shower-fairies trip,
Where sea-gulls, folding weary wing,
  Alternate rise and dip.

A willow withe through silver gills,
  My trophies I display.
To yonder wine-shop first I 'll hie;
  Then homeward wend my way.

In the following we find a familiar strain. It is the Korean setting of " O for a lodge in some vast wilderness! "

Weary of the ceaseless clamour,
Of the false smile and the glamour
  Of the place they call the world;
Like the sailor home returning,
For the wave no longer yearning,
  I my sail of life have furled.

Deep within this mountain fastness,
Minified by nature's vastness,
  Hermit-wise a lodge I 'll build.
Clouds shall form the frescoed ceiling,
Heaven's blue depths but half revealing;
  Sunbeam raftered, starlight filled.

In this lakelet deep I 'll fetter
Yon fair moon. Oh, who could better
  Nature's self incarcerate?
Though, for ransom, worlds be offered,
I will scorn the riches proffered,
  Keep her still and laugh at fate.

And when Autumn's hand shall scatter
Leaves upon my floor, what matter,
  Since I have the wind for broom?
Cleaning house mere play I'll reckon,
Only to the storm-sprites beckon.
  With their floods they 'll cleanse each room.

From this it would seem that the Koreans cannot be charged with a lack of imagination but rather with an exuberance of it. The following few lines to a mountain brook show that in his appreciation of nature the Korean is not far behind the more polished poet of the West.

O cloud-born rivulet, that down this mountain slope
Dost thread thy devious way, fret not thyself because
Obstructions bar thy path, nor say "I may not be."
The rock that buffets thee to-day shall melt away
Before thy constancy. Thou 'rt mightier than man;
For though, by human craft, athwart thy humble course
Mountains be piled, Time shall be with thee, and ye twain
Shall overtop them all. Though thou be curbed and bound,
Divided, used, aye, soiled, a thousand *li* shall seem,
In retrospect, triumphal progress. Dost thou now,
Like trembling hare, peep forth from out yon covert's shade?
Fear not, but know that ere days shall give birth to months,
Thy voice shall mingle with the chorus of the sea.

I will add but a single illustration of the poetic element in Korean folk-lore. It is the legend of the casting of the great bell that hangs in the centre of Seoul.

The master-founder stands with angry brow
Before the bell, across whose graven side
A fissure deep proclaims his labour naught.
For thrice the furnace blast has yielded up
Its glowing treasure to the mould, and thrice
The tortured metal, writhing as in pain,
Has burst the brazen casement of the bell.
And now like a dumb bullock of the lists,
That stands at bay while nimble toreadors
Fling out the crimson challenge in his face,
And the hot, clamouring crowd with oaths demand
The fatal stroke; so hangs the sullen bell
From his thwart beam, refusing still to lend
His voice to swell the song hymeneal,
To toll the requiem of the passing dead,
Or bid the sun good-night with curfew sad.
The master-founder speaks: "If but an ounce
Of that rare metal, which the spirits hide
From mortal sight, were mingled with the flux,
It would a potion prove so powerful
To ease the throes of birth and in the place
Of disappointment bring fruition glad."
And lo! a royal edict, at the hand
Of couriers swift, speeds o'er the land like flame
Across the stubble-drift of sun-dried plains.
"Let prayer be made to spirits of the earth
That they may render up their treasure, lest
Our royal city, like a Muslim mute,
Shall have no tongue to voice her joy or pain."
The great sun reddened with the altar smoke;
The very clouds caught up their trailing skirts
And fled the reek of burning hecatombs;
But still the nether spirits gave no sign.
When, look! a mother-witch comes leading through
The city gate a dimpled child and cries,
"If to the molten mass you add this child,
'T will make a rare amalgam, aye, so rare
That he who once has heard the bell's deep tone
Shall ever after hunger for it more
Than for the voice of mother, wife or child."
Again the furnace fires leap aloft;
Again the broken fragments of the bell
Cast off their torpor at the touch of flame.
Unpitying are the hands that cast the child
Into that seething mass. Fit type of Hell!
Nay, type of human shame, that innocence

Should thus be made to bear the heavy cross
For empty pageantry. How could it be
That Justice should permit the flowing years
To wash away the mem'ry of that shame?
Nor did she. Through that seeming metal coursed
The life-blood of the child. Its fibre clothed
A human soul. Supernal alchemy!
And when the gathered crowd stood motionless
And mute to hear the birth-note of the bell,
And the great tongue-beam, hung by linkèd chain
Aloft, smote on his brazen breast, 't was no
Bell cry that came forth of his cavern throat.
'T was *Emmi*, *Emmi*, *Emmi*, *Emmillé*.
"O Mother, woe is me, O Mother mine!"[1]

[1] The Koreans hear in the dull thud of the wooden beam against the bell a far-off resemblance to the word *em-mi*, which means "mother." Hence the legend.

CHAPTER XXV

ART

THE Korean is highly susceptible to the melodies of art; but not to its harmonies. May this not be said of Far Eastern art in general? Japan is the home of *bijouterie,* but the higher forms of art which require for their production the genius of combination are conspicuous by their absence. The single exception may be found in Japanese landscape gardening, but even here their art is dwarfed and cramped. Now this ability to combine different elements for a general effect is quite lacking in the Korean. If you go into a Korean gentleman's garden, for instance, you may find some beautiful plants, but huddled together in such a way that they can give no pleasure. The Korean way is to pick out one of these and place it by itself to be admired as an individual object. He has no idea of grouping them so that each may enhance the beauty of the others. However many works of art a Korean may possess, he will not have more than one or two of them exposed at a time. After one of them has been standing for a week or two in his *sarang,* or reception room, it will be removed and another substituted for it. In this way he enjoys a variety and does not soon tire of his collection. It may be objected that this is not due to ignorance of the effects of combination, but because the Korean house is so arranged that it does not admit of an effective combination of several works of art at one and the same time. We believe, however, that if Koreans had any instinct for effective combinations they would long since have found a way to make them possible.

It cannot be said that the Korean is lacking in the æsthetic instinct, but its development has been narrow. There has been

no scientific development in their art, no formulation of æsthetic laws, no intermixture of a rational or regulative method. The statement that there is a pronounced arithmetical element in music, that geometry is essential to successful landscape gardening or that a knowledge of conic sections is essential to bridge-building, would arouse only mirth in the Korean. But it is nevertheless true that the lack of the mathematical element has deprived all Asia of genuine martial music.

A Korean house is a good illustration of the statement that *bijouterie* is the prevailing aim of their art. However large the house may be or however spacious the site, the place is divided by a network of walls into a vast number of alleys and courtyards, each very pretty in its way, but destroying all possibility of effective combination. The whole space is frittered away in a labyrinth of cheerless walls, which to the Westerner are more suggestive of a prison than a residence. Now the Korean delights in this bee-hive sort of existence. Each suite of rooms has its special charm to him. In one of them he keeps, perhaps, a beautifully embroidered screen, in another an ancient vase which is a family heirloom, and in another a rare potted palm or cactus; but he would never think of exhibiting all these things in combination.

One advantage that arises from their one-thing-at-a-time form of æsthetic development is that it can be shared more equally by high and low alike. If a single flowering plant can give as much pleasure as a whole gardenful, the poor man is much nearer his wealthy neighbour in his opportunities for æsthetic pleasure than is the case in Western countries.

This method has its advantages. It tends to a concentration of attention and a consequent exactness in detail which are not generally found in connection with a broader form of art. His embroidered butterfly will be worked out to a painful point of exactness, while the perspective of the whole scene may be ludicrously wrong. The Korean almost invariably makes the farther edge of the table longer on his canvas than the nearer edge, and

I once saw a magnificently embroidered stork standing on one leg, while the other leg, which was held up gracefully, passed *behind* a tree that stood at least ten feet beyond the bird. It may be that the Korean has always been so closely shut up by walls that he has never so much as imagined such a thing as a "vanishing point."

I am not sure but it is this love of detail that has led to the introduction of the grotesque and monstrous into the art of the whole East; a sort of protest against their limitations. The æsthetic nature having been confined so long in narrow channels was forced to find a vent for itself in some way, and did so by a violent rupture into the realm of the fantastic. So we find in every picture some dwarfed tree or curiously water-worn rock, — some malformation that excites the curiosity. No picture of an ancient warrior is correct unless he has warts as big as walnuts all over his face, and eyebrows that rival his beard in length.

As to colour in art, the Koreans are still as primitive as in ancient days. Their red is the red of blood or of the peppers that lie ripening on their roofs. Their green is the vivid green of the new-sprouting rice or the dark blue-green of the pine-tree. Nature's colours are in their art as nature's sounds are in their wonderfully mimetic language.

As to form in art, the Korean is strictly a realist, except in so far as he has impinged upon the realm of the fantastic. There are no idealised expressions in his art, no winged cherubs, no personification of any power of nature, no Cupid with his bow and arrows; and it is just because of this lack of imaginative power that such a thing as æsthetic combination is unthought of. Imagination is the power of arranging and rearranging one's mental furniture in such a way as to produce new and pleasing, or useful, combinations; and if a man has not this power, the arrangement of his house furniture, the colours on his canvas, the notes of his music and the flowers of his garden must all suffer. It is this lack which has made Korean history

so bare of great men. Had it not been for the dreamers of history, we should have had no Columbus, or Newton, or Hideyoshi or Genghis Khan. Imagination is the mother of enterprise and the forerunner of achievement, and the lack of it has made Korea the "shrimp between two whales."

But some may say that the common belief in evil spirits and the genii of mountain, tree and stream implies a high degree of imaginative power. Not so; this is nothing but instinct, the natural working of the law of self-preservation. You might as well say that the porcupine has imagination because he rolls up into a ball and presents the thorny side of life to the approaching enemy. The crudest method of explaining obscure phenomena is the attributing of them to the agency of demons, genii and spirits. So far from being evidence of an imaginative nature, this demon worship argues the very opposite. He fails to see things in their proper relations, and he remains oblivious of the fact that, running through these phenomena, there is a oneness of plan and an adaptation of means to ends which precludes the possibility of his horde of spirits. It is moral instinct which has led him to reason out some personal agency in the conduct of human affairs. In other words, it is conscience, which, from the pagan point of view, *does* "make cowards of us all." The consciousness of personal demerit makes the Korean picture his spirits and goblins as inimical to man, and produces that servility, as distinguished from humility, which is indelibly stamped upon all pagan worship.

But we must hasten to enumerate briefly some of the most conspicuous forms of Korean art. We have already mentioned music. Architecture has never been looked upon here as a fine art. It is entirely utilitarian, except in the case of royal palaces and temples, and even here art is exhibited almost exclusively in the decorations. These and other architectural decorations may be passed by with brief mention, for they are anything but artistic to the Western eye. In mural decoration they have produced some pleasing effects, but they are very crude and will

not bear comparison with what goes under that name in our own lands. Embroidery upon silk is considered by Koreans to be one of their finest achievements in the line of art. Some of it is fairly well executed, but the very best will not begin to compare with even the medium grades in China or Japan. Painting sketches of branches of trees, sprays of flowers, bunches of grass, and old stumps and rocks with a brush pen and India ink is a favourite form of artistic work, and here we find regularly formulated laws. Each blade of grass must droop in accordance with a fixed law, and each flower must stand at just the right angle from the stem. After many years of familiarity with these things, even the Westerner finds a certain amount of interest in these pictures, and while they would be called the veriest daubs by the uninitiated, we must confess that they make a certain approximation to what we might call real art. It is a question, however, whether it is worth the time it takes to learn to appreciate it.

In the line of ceramics Korea has nothing to show. Long centuries ago she may have had some slight claims to consideration along this line, but there are very few evidences of it to-day. It is common for travellers to buy small iron boxes ornamented with inlaid silver or nickel. The work is crude, but the Greek key pattern which is usually followed redeems them from utter contempt. Some of the silver filigree work that is done, especially in the far northeast, is worthy of mention, but the artisans have only a few set designs, and these they follow so slavishly as to suggest the idea that they are heirlooms. Inlaying mother-o'-pearl in a kind of lacquer upon boxes, chests, and cabinets has a pleasing effect, but the inartistic forms of the objects thus decorated detract much from the general result. In this also the key pattern is most prominent.

CHAPTER XXVI

EDUCATION

IT has been only in the capital and in a few of the prominent provincial centres that there has been any considerable modification of the immemorial methods of education, and so we will first explain the old system, which still generally prevails, and afterward note the modern innovations.

Education, in its narrower sense of scholastic training, was introduced into Korea from China along with the literature and religions of that land. Both the subject matter and the method are therefore exotic rather than indigenous. For this reason it is easy to explain why Korea has no national literature of a distinctive type. Through all the long centuries education has meant the study of the Chinese character and the great classics which form the recognised curriculum of China. Most educated Koreans can tell you much more about the history of China than they can about their own national history; just as any English or American college boy can tell you more about Latin grammar than he can about the grammar of his own tongue.

With the few exceptions to be noted later, there are no public schools in Korea. It is only within the last decade that such a thing as an educational bureau has existed in Seoul. Even to-day the annual appropriation for this purpose amounts only to twenty thousand dollars, a large part of which is used in office expenses.

Generally speaking, education is a private affair and has so been considered from the first. Every village has its little room, always in a private house, where the boys sit on the floor with their large-print books of Chinese characters before them, and, as they sway back and forth with half-shut eyes, they drone out

the sounds of the ideographs, not in unison, but each for himself. There is no such thing as a class, for no two of the boys are together, and to the unaccustomed ear the babel that results is almost stunning. But the system has its good as well as its bad points.

As the boys are not graded, the bright ones are not held back by the dull ones, nor are the dull ones forced ahead superficially in order to preserve the semblance of grade. Each one goes on his merits, and individuality is developed more than in our schools. Then, again, the deafening noise about him compels the boy to extreme concentration upon his own work. It is difficult for us to fancy that mentality would be possible under the circumstances, but the truth is that no one of those shouting boys hears any other than his own voice. The outside confusion, instead of shattering his mental processes, drives him in upon himself and probably enables him to memorise better than if he were alone. On the other hand, the Chinese method puts a veto upon all *esprit de corps,* and the boy loses a large part of the beneficial influence of comparison and competition.

The study of the ideograph is a consuming passion with the well-born Korean. We talk about burning the midnight oil, but the determined Korean student is said to tie a string about the beam overhead and attach the end to his top-knot in order to keep himself from falling over and going to sleep.

Pedagogy is neither a finished science nor a fine art in Korea. It merely consists in sitting before the boys with a stick and seeing that each one continues to shout, but there is plenty of evidence that, under cover of the noise, the urchins frequently talk with each other, as the choir boys in a Devonshire church are said to have done. During an antiphonal chant one boy changed the devotional words to: "John, ye owe me fower marbles." And the reply came back in sacred song: "You 'm a liar; 't is but two."

However high may be the esteem in which letters are held, the ordinary teacher is a very humble member of so-called good

society. He is treated politely by everyone, but he is looked upon very much as a pensioner. He receives no salary, but the boys bring him frequent presents, and he ekes out a living in some way. But there is a more dignified side to the question. Teaching seems to be looked upon as a thing that cannot be estimated in money value. You can buy the services of a cobbler or a mason, but knowledge is too fine a thing to be bartered. The same holds true of medicine. The physician takes no regular fee, but is the recipient of a gift proportionate to the wealth of the patient and the amount of service rendered. Nominally the service is a gift.

In all Korea there is nothing corresponding to our learned professions, where large fees are required and the service rendered is almost purely an intellectual one.

Throughout the history of this country the aim of the boy has been to master the classics and acquire a literary style which will carry him through the national examinations called *kwaga.* These were of various kinds. The novitiates in the country, having attended preliminary examinations at the provincial capitals under the eye of government examiners, those few who were successful were sent up to the capital, where several kinds of tests still awaited them. Some of these were merely preparatory or continuative, while others gave access to the long-desired haven of political preferment.

Three or four times every year the capital would swarm with men from the eight provinces who had come to make the great attempt. Some of them were old hands who had tried time and again without success. Behind the Kyöng-bok Palace lie the deserted examination grounds, where crowds gathered and sat in groups under enormous umbrellas writing furiously on their essays. These were upon themes propounded by the master of ceremonies or often by the King himself. No care seemed to be taken to prevent communication between the different aspirants, and opportunities to bring in concealed manuscripts were abundant. All sorts of tricks were played, and the

final award was only occasionally a just one. The element of luck entered very largely into the event, and there is only too much evidence that "pull" had still more to do than fortune. And yet, in every examination, out of a score of successful candidates two or three at least were honestly chosen. It was the narrow chance of becoming one of this small fraction that brought thousands of men up from the country.

When the paper was finished, the writer inscribed his name in the lower corner, and then slit the paper up a little way and folded the name in and pasted it. The examiners were not supposed to know the name of any writer until after the merits of his paper were passed upon. After writing his name, the candidate rolled his paper up and threw it like a lance over a barrier or fence made of spears stuck in the ground. When the names of the successful ones were posted the following morning, they were dressed up in gala attire, and paraded about the streets of the capital on horseback, and received the congratulations of their friends. If the fortunate man was a countryman, his village went *en fête* in his honour. This system of examinations was discarded ten years ago.

As education had to do so largely with the mastery of the Confucian classics, it went hand in hand with religion, and, though there was no genuine educational bureau, the *Sung-gyun-gwan,* or Confucian School, in Seoul might be called the centre of education for the country, just as the Royal Academy in England is the centre of English art. This Confucian School still exists as a sort of honorary institution, to which recognised scholars are appointed by the Emperor, but without emolument and without any duties to perform. It is not a school in any real sense, but a sort of scholastic club or college.

For the past ten years education has occupied a place of greater honour, and the Educational Department is coördinate with that of War, Finance, Law, Agriculture or Foreign Affairs. The small sum appropriated shows, however, its relative status. Education receives twenty thousand dollars, while an almost

entirely useless army receives one million dollars. In Seoul a dozen or more primary schools have been established, with an average attendance of about fifty boys. These are of rather inferior grade, but they are much better than nothing. Arithmetic, geography and history are taught, besides the Chinese character and the Japanese vernacular. There is a small normal school, but it is in native hands only and its product is of little or no account. The so-called Middle School, which is housed in a substantial foreign building, can accommodate three hundred students, but the actual number is only about sixty. Two foreigners, American and Japanese, together with six Koreans, form the faculty of this school. Besides the higher Korean branches, chemistry, physics, botany, physiology, general history, geography, arithmetic, algebra and geometry are taught. The difficulty in this, as in all the other schools, is that the government gives no encouragement to the graduates. The student expects, and has a right to expect, that after graduating from a government school he should have a better chance to receive official position than ordinary, uneducated Koreans. But he finds that nepotism still holds sway, and that personal and family influence is a better door to preferment than education. These Korean youth have not yet come to recognise education as its own reward, and so the schools are almost empty.

Many of the Koreans are excellent students, especially in mathematics. They are quick to catch the point, and in every respect they compare favourably with boys of the same age in Western countries. There is no doubt whatever that they are the intellectual equals of the Japanese. They have lacked only the opportunity and the incentive.

There are a number of important foreign language schools in Seoul, — English, French, German, Japanese and Chinese. These are successfully carried on by gentlemen of these various nationalities. The government also employs a German musician to train a native band according to Western methods, and so successful has he been that foreigners hardly know which to

admire more, — the skill and perseverance of the instructor or the natural talent displayed by the pupils.

In the various provincial capitals the government has established, in a desultory way, a number of schools of intermediate grade which are fairly successful, but until the public sentiment of the people at large rises to the fact that education is one of the main bulwarks of the state, no work of large dimensions can be done. The time will come.

Various missionary societies have established successful schools in this country, notably in Seoul and in Pyeng-yang, and these institutions rank the highest in the land. Many of their graduates hold positions under the government and command general respect.

There have been numerous attempts to establish private schools, but the enthusiasm seems to die out after a few years, funds run low and the inevitable end comes. Some of these have been temporarily successful and have demonstrated some slight growth of public sentiment in the right direction.

One hopeful sign is the recent immense increase in the demand for reading matter throughout the land. Those who have in hand the sale of books say that the demand has increased fourfold during the past year.

One of the most powerful educative influences is the native press. This agency has been at work here for some ten years, and, while there have been many failures, yet it cannot be seriously questioned that the various daily, weekly and monthly papers have done an enormous amount of good. The Korean's idea of the daily press is still somewhat crude, and is illustrated by the fact that when some statement is denied he is very likely to say, "It must be true. The paper says so." It is to be hoped that the Korean press will always retain and deserve this reputation for veracity, which we fear had been partially lost in some lands we wot of. And in truth, so far as our observation goes, the native papers make an honest attempt to give straightforward and accurate news.

The matter of school text-books is still in a chaotic condition. Some people think they should all be printed in the pure native character, while the more conservative, together with the government, opine that the mixed Chinese and Korean script should be used. In this mixed script the verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs are expressed by Chinese characters, and all connectives, whether grammatical, syntactic or logical, are in pure Korean. The result is something like the rebus in which words are interspersed with pictures. The system is a clumsy one, but it may prove a useful stepping-stone from the pure Chinese to the pure Korean. Not until the Chinese is entirely discarded will the broadest general education be possible. This is as true of Japan as it is of Korea. Meanwhile all sorts of text-books are being published, without regard to consistency, and simply by private and individual initiative. Some of the best work in this line is being done by missionaries, who are the pioneers of education here as everywhere else. It is a hopeful sign that a number of foreigners here, among whom the missionaries largely predominate, have formed an Educational Association, and the important preliminary work of evolving a uniform system of nomenclature for all the sciences has been taken in hand. This is a fundamental necessity, and the results can only be good.

As for industrial and technical schools, nothing has yet been done in Korea. There have been sporadic attempts at agricultural, mining and engineering schools, but they have all failed, largely because such education has not been based upon a previous mastery of the common elementary branches. Much less has anything been attempted in the line of professional schools, if we except the theological training classes carried on by the various missions. A few Koreans are studying medicine under the foreign physicians, and there is a small law school, but, with the exception of a single Korean lady physician who was educated in America, there are no qualified native physicians.

A number of Koreans have graduated from American or English institutions and have returned to this country. As a rule these men have done good work here, and have demonstrated that the natural intellectual capacity of this people is equal to that of any other.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE EMPEROR OF KOREA

THE personality of any supreme ruler of an empire or kingdom is a subject of interested comment. The mere power which he holds in his hands compels attention to his personal characteristics. Much has been written about the Emperor of Korea, mainly by transient visitors to Seoul who have picked up such gossip as was current at the time they passed through. Some of the most libellous of these statements appeared in a recent issue of one of our leading American magazines and written by a distinguished traveller. That writer spent two or three weeks in Korea, and everyone of his statements about the Emperor of Korea is such as may be picked up on the streets of any capital and is worthy only of the columns of our most sensational newspapers. They contain certain half-truths distorted out of all proper proportion and exaggerated to the point of caricature. The writer knew nothing about the Emperor from personal acquaintance. Some months ago there appeared in the "Century Magazine" an article by a former Secretary of the American Legation in Seoul which came far nearer the truth, for that gentleman had a personal acquaintance with the Emperor and knew what he was talking about. A comparison of those two estimates of the man will show how wide is the difference between irresponsible gossip and sober fact.

The Emperor of Korea is now fifty-five years old and is a gentleman of average natural ability, which has been greatly influenced by his environment, not always happily. At the age of twelve years he was nominated to the throne by the Queen Dowager, in view of the fact that the former King died without

issue. His father became regent until the boy should attain his majority. The regent was a fierce and relentless despot, who began his career by a sanguinary persecution of Roman Catholics. The boy lived in the midst of unspeakable atrocities, and was brought up to believe that the knife, the poison and the torture are the main implements of government. His father married him to a member of the Min family, and when the time came for the young King to assume the duties of his office, he found himself torn between filial duty toward his imperious father and the softer but no less effective pressure brought to bear on him by the Queen. She and the regent were deadly enemies. Each of them had a will far more unbending than that of the King, and from the year 1872 there was war to the knife between these two individuals, which ended only with the assassination of the Queen in 1895 by the Japanese.

We must remember that in Korea, as in China, the chief ruler is limited in his actual power by the fact that those immediately about him can command all avenues of information and can colour that information to suit their own purposes. The war between the Queen and the regent opened when the latter sent an infernal machine to the father of the Queen, which resulted in the destruction of almost the entire family. If we try to imagine the state of mind of a ruler shut off from full access to genuine information and surrounded with such instruments of death, with murder in the hearts of those most intimately connected with his own life, we shall be able to picture to ourselves the disabilities under which the young King grew up. In 1882 the regent again tried to take the life of the Queen. The soldiers swarmed into the palace, tore in pieces, before the eyes of the King, some of the leading members of the Queen's faction, and missed killing the Queen herself only through a lucky accident. All this time the King himself knew not at what instant the knife might be put to his own throat. Two years later a band of fanatical men determined to force the government to follow the example of Japan. They seized the

person of the King and before his eyes slaughtered seven members of his Cabinet and one of his most trusted personal servants. The Japanese, who backed this desperate and sanguinary enterprise, had to retire, and things went on as before; but what sort of training was this for a young King just entering upon his reign? It is only to be wondered at that his nerves survived the strain at all. In 1895 occurred the unspeakable monstrosity of the cold-blooded murder of the Queen at the instigation of the Japanese minister, when the regent, rioting in fierce joy of a borrowed power, saw the fruition of his long desire. All during that terrible time the King lived in momentary dread of assassination. And who can wonder? Did not every circumstance in the case warrant his fear of sudden death? He was surrounded by a Cabinet composed of men thoroughly in the hands of Japan, and was virtually a prisoner. For weeks he refused to eat a mouthful of food except what was sent in a locked box from the house of an American missionary, such was his fear of poison. Finally the strain became too great. He could endure the suspense no longer. After trying in vain to secure asylum in the American legation, he threw himself into the arms of Russia by a secret flight from the palace. For a time he had rest in the Russian legation, where, be it said to the lasting credit of Mr. Waeber, no pressure was brought to bear upon him to give Russia predominant power in the peninsula. Doubtless this was why Mr. Waeber was removed to make room for a more strenuous man. He was too good for Russia. This situation could not continue indefinitely, but the King would not go back to his old palace which had witnessed such a tragedy. He built a smaller one in the vicinity of the foreign legation, where he would be near help in case of trouble. His nerves had been hopelessly shattered. Originally a man of ordinary ability, the scenes through which he had passed had stamped their impress upon him, and he had come to believe that craft was the only available instrument to use. When Mr. Waeber was superseded by a less scrupulous man, the posi-

tion of the King was rendered more difficult. It was necessary to play off Russian against Japanese in order to steer clear of the clutches of both. The Emperor had been brought by hard experience to believe that all talk of reform was but an arrow aimed at him personally, and he was intensely suspicious of any curtailment of his own prerogatives. He was and is a man of kindly nature, and he hates suffering and pain in every form, whether for himself or his people. There is no doubt that under the selfish advice of interested ministers he has allowed the extortion of money from the people, but no one who knows him can believe that he has ever wantonly and knowingly inflicted suffering upon his subjects. There have been countless cases in which he has proved the contrary. One little incident will illustrate. Near the Altar to Heaven, where he went to assume the title of Emperor, a foreigner was building a house. The rafters had been put on, but the roof was not covered. A host of Koreans swarmed into the yard and climbed to the roof to look down upon the ceremony in the adjoining compound. The American was extremely uneasy, for this was far outside the limits of ordinary courtesy, and he hastened to force the Koreans down; but the Emperor, noticing the commotion and divining the cause, sent a special messenger in haste to say that the Koreans need not be disturbed. This is only a trivial case, but there are others. Nothing could exceed the solicitude of the Emperor when, last year, the ludicrous attempts at monetary reform had driven the merchants to desperation. He tried to help them by lending several hundred thousand yen to them to tide them over the crisis, and the fact that the Japanese would not allow him to do it cannot detract from the credit that is due him.

Much has been said of his superstitiousness. This is based largely upon the fact that the women of the palace, who share with other Korean women the unhappy legacy of illiteracy, have often called in various kinds of sorceresses and mountebanks for their own delectation. The King has indulged them

in this caprice, and it is possible that he may have amused himself now and then in listening to the extravaganzas of these spirit mediums, but that he gave any more heed to them than any other educated Korean gentleman would is incredible. This sort of talk belongs in the category of those racy accounts given by tourists, who move heaven and earth to get an audience with the Emperor, and then come home to criticise the quality of his wines and sneer at his manners.

The Koreans have been called a people of inferior intelligence, but the truth is that in pure diplomacy, finesse, they have outwitted the Japanese at every point during the past quarter of a century. In 1884, in 1894, in 1904 the Koreans outmanœuvred the Japanese in diplomacy, and it was only by coming in with the sword that the latter carried her point. At the beginning of the last war Korea received from Japan a definite promise to preserve the independence of the Korean government. Japan felt called upon to give this guarantee because she needed something in return, namely, the passivity of the Korean people and their good will during the war. Korea believed the promise, but when the need of keeping her quiet had passed Japan by an act of unparalleled treachery proved that her word was not as good as Russia's; for while Russia's retention of Manchuria was only the postponement of a promised evacuation, the seizure of Korea was an absolute and unblushing refusal to pay, for favours shown, the price that had been definitely agreed upon. There is no sophism that can evade this fact.

Attention must be called to the way the Emperor of Korea has always treated Americans and American interests. Nothing has been too good for us. We have had the best gold-mining concession, the first railroad concession, the leading place in education, the unbounded confidence of both King and people. We built the first electric tramway and lighting plant. We obtained the important concession for supplying the city of Seoul with a modern water system. All these things have been given us almost without the asking. Nowhere in the world has there

been a more open field for the investment of American capital. The Korean Emperor and people have always looked to us as the one power that had no political wire to pull, no axe to grind, no purely selfish policy to carry out. But in the face of all this, we have been the first to push her over the brink, to accept the outrage of November 17, 1905, without loud and instant protest. Why did the world objurgate the failure of Russia to keep her promises in Manchuria and condemn her as the international felon and then turn about and allow Japan to stultify herself tenfold worse in Korea without protest?

Those who have been on the spot and watched closely the tragic culmination can see something of how the nature of the Emperor, warped by terrible vicissitudes and held for months at a time in the most heart-breaking suspense, has been dwarfed and shrivelled in the furnace. And yet at this very hour he stands firm in his loyalty to his people. He denounces the so-called treaty of November, 1905, and demands the attention of the powers to Japan's treachery.

CHAPTER XXVIII

WOMAN'S POSITION

IT is a trite saying that the civilisation of a people may be gauged by the treatment accorded to women. This is only partially true, for in the various races of mankind special conditions make special rulings necessary. For instance, in Thibet, where there seems to be a great preponderance of males, the practice of polyandry prevails; but however disgusting this may appear to the Western taste or the Western conscience, it does not place the Thibetan on a lower plane of civilisation than the Esquimaux who do not practise polyandry. Again, in China, and in all lands that have been permeated by Confucian principles, the prime necessity of securing male issue has largely influenced the position of woman and made her lot more tolerable than in Turkey or Persia; but we cannot argue from this that Chinese civilisation is at all in advance of that of Turkey or Persia. We must look to the causes underlying the better or worse treatment of women, in order to discover whether it is a true index of a people's civilisation.

When India was opened to the world, the West cried out in horror against the brutal custom of the self-immolation of widows. But even this was due to natural causes. It was a great preventive law which forced all wives, for the sake of their own happiness, to guard most sedulously the health of their husbands. The common use of poison in the tropics, added to the crafty and vindictive nature of the people, made this cruel law, if not necessary, at least intelligible.

In the same way the people of the West are moved with righteous indignation because the women of the Far East are kept so secluded and are not allowed that free intercourse with

their fellow-men that is accorded women in the West. This feeling is also in a sense misplaced, for though the condition of woman in Asia is deplorable, we should rather criticise the moral status of the people at large, which renders the seclusion of woman a necessity, than to find fault with the mere fact. Such seclusion is a mean between the promiscuity of savage tribes and the emancipated condition of women in enlightened countries. It is as much better than the former as it is worse than the latter. There can be no question that it is Christianity which has brought about the desirable conditions that prevail in the West, and we need look for no such conditions in the East until it is permeated with ideas emanating from Christian standards. We affirm, then, that under existing moral conditions the seclusion of woman in the Far East is a blessing and not a curse, and its immediate abolishment would result in a moral chaos rather than, as some suppose, in the elevation of society.

The discussion of woman's position in Korea falls under several general heads, such as seclusion, occupation, education, punishments, property rights, testamentary rights, divorce, courtship and marriage, religion, etc.

The degree of seclusion which a Korean woman enjoys depends upon the position she holds in society. Broadly speaking, there are three classes, which may best be termed the honourable, the respectable and the disreputable. As might be expected, the seclusion of women here corresponds to what we call "exclusiveness" in the West. The higher her position, the more complete is her seclusion. And just as women in America or Europe pride themselves upon their exclusiveness, so women here pride themselves upon the fact that no male person outside the immediate household ever sees their faces.

Up to the age of ten or twelve years, the little girl of good family enjoys considerable freedom, and can play in the yard and see anyone that comes; but the time arrives when she must never be seen without the *changot,* or sleeved apron, over her head held close about her face. From that time she remains

mostly indoors, and is familiarly seen only by the members of the household and the immediate relatives. This stage of her life is short, for she is married young and goes to take her place in the family of her husband. After that time she can be seen and conversed with, face to face, only by the following male members of the family: her husband, father, father-in-law, uncle, cousin, second cousin, etc., down to what the Koreans call the "eighth joint," which means about fourth cousin with us. It will at once appear, therefore, that a Korean woman is not entirely cut off from association with gentlemen, for, in a country where families are so large as in Korea, the number of men within these prescribed degrees may be anywhere from twenty to two hundred. But none of these will ever enter the inner part of the house except by invitation of the husband and in his company.

After a young bride arrives at the home of her husband, she will have free access to the private rooms of her new father and mother, even as their own daughters do, but neither her father nor any other man except her husband will ever step inside her private rooms, except under stress of sickness or other imperative cause. If any of her male relatives are to see her, it must be in the rooms of her father and mother. This does not apply to the young brothers of her husband, who may come into her room upon invitation up to the age of thirteen, after which they too are excluded. If there are two married brothers living at their father's house, neither of them can enter the private rooms of the other, though each can meet the wife of the other in the rooms of the parents. If, however, a young man marries and sets up an establishment of his own, he becomes the head of the house, and any of his male relatives, or hers, down to the "eighth joint," can enter the inner rooms upon invitation of the husband, but they will never do this unless there is some special reason for seeing the wife, since the husband will be sure to have a *sarang*, or general reception room, where he meets all his male friends.

As a rule, a lady may go and visit her lady friends with considerable freedom, but she must always leave word at home exactly where she is going. She will go in a closed "chair" carried by two men. The chair is brought to her door, the men retire till she has entered, and when she arrives at the friend's house, the men set down the chair and retire while she is getting out. She will invariably be accompanied by a slave girl or other female servant who runs along beside the chair. Arrived at the friend's house, she enters the inner rooms, and while she is there neither the friend's husband nor any other man may enter, unless he should chance to be within the prescribed limits of consanguinity. A lady of wealth or even of moderate means will not walk on the street, although this is permissible provided she keeps her face carefully hidden by the *changot.*

Women of the middle class are not so secluded as those of the upper class, and yet they will never be seen on the street without the head covering. At their homes they may be seen by any male relative down to the "tenth joint." We see, then, that women of the middle class are visible to relatives two degrees further removed than those by whom her higher sister may be seen; and besides this, it is far less common for a man of the middle class to possess a general reception room, and the result is that relatives are much oftener invited into the inner rooms. The statement sometimes made, that no respectable Korean woman will ever be seen walking on the street, is very far from the truth. Hundreds of them may be seen every day.

Women of the lower or so-called disreputable class include dancing-girls, slaves, courtesans, sorceresses and Buddhist nuns. I am speaking now from the Korean point of view. A slave or a nun may be a respectable person, but she is classed with the others by Koreans. They are subject to none of the laws of seclusion that apply to so-called reputable people. In fact, they are not allowed to use the *changot* to cover the face. A possible exception may be found in the courtesan, who may cover the

head, but is not allowed to use the pad or cushion on top of the head by which the *changot* is supported.

Besides these women of the lower orders, there are a few others that never cover the head and who, although entirely respectable, may be seen by men without reproach. These are lady physicians, of whom there are many in Korea, and blind female exorcists. Women of even the upper class may enter the medical profession, and it is said that many of them are very expert at acupuncture, which is about all the surgery that the Esculapian art can boast here.

Although women of the upper and middle classes cover the face on the street, yet this concealment is by no means so complete as among the women of Turkey, for the *changot* is simply held together before the face with the hand, and frequently the entire face is exposed. Elderly women of entire respectability often take little or no pains to observe the rule strictly, but one would seldom have an opportunity of catching a glance at more than one eye and a small portion of the face of a young woman.

In an afternoon's walk through the streets of Seoul you will see hundreds of women going about without any head covering whatever. They are mostly slaves. Now and then a dancing-girl will be seen riding on a pony or in an open chair with uncovered face, and, if a wedding procession passes, a large number of unveiled women with enormous piles of hair on their heads will be seen carrying gaily decorated boxes in which are kept the "plenishings" of the bride. These all belong to the low class.

It may be said in a general way that the chief occupation of the respectable Korean woman, whether of high or low degree, is motherhood. Like the ancient Hebrew woman, she says, "Give me children or I die." This springs from the instinct for self-preservation. The Confucian code renders male offspring a *sine qua non* of a successful life, and a woman who brings her husband no children is doubly discredited. There is no more valid cause for divorce in Korea than barrenness.

There are no "old maids" here. It becomes a matter of public scandal if a girl passes her twentieth year without settling in a home. Of course, in the case of cripples or incompetents it is a little difficult to arrange, but many a young man takes his bride home only to find out that she is a deaf-mute or cross-eyed or humpbacked or partially paralysed. This is a triumph for the old woman, the professional go-between, whose skill in "working off" these unmarketable goods upon unsuspecting swains is proverbial. But the balance is even as between the brides and grooms, for a nice girl as often finds herself married to a drunkard or a case of *non compos mentis.*

The Korean woman's main business then is wifehood and motherhood; but even so, there are many opportunities for her to help along the family finances and supplement the wages of a husband who is too often shiftless and dependent or even worse.

First, as to occupations open to women of the upper class. Strange as it may seem, the only kind of shop such a woman can keep is a wine-shop. Of course she never appears in person, but if her house is properly situated she can turn a portion of it into a wine-shop, where customers can be served by her slave or other servant. No lady would ever think of selling cloth or vegetables or fruit or anything except wine. Silk culture is an important industry, in which ladies take a prominent part, especially in the country. The care of the eggs, the feeding of the worms, the manipulation of the cocoons and the spinning of the silk afford means whereby the wife of the gentleman farmer passes many pleasant hours and adds materially to the finances of the household.

Sewing and embroidery are usual occupations of ladies, but they do very little of it for money. The vendible goods of this kind are made by a different class. Many Korean ladies of restricted means act as tutors to the daughters of their more fortunate sisters. They teach the Chinese character and literature, letter-writing, burial customs, music, housekeeping, hygiene,

care of infants, obstetrics, religion, fiction, needlework and embroidery. Of course the teacher is not seen by the gentleman of the house.

In the country it is not beneath the dignity of a lady to tend bees. She may also help in the care of fruit trees, especially the jujube. She may also make straw shoes. It seems singular that a lady should be able to make straw shoes when it would be entirely beneath her dignity to make the better kind, such, for instance, as those her husband wears in town.

If an inmate of a house is taken ill, someone must run for an exorcist to come and drive out the evil spirit which has caused the trouble. It is the blind people who do this work. It is not confined to men alone, but any blind woman, whatever her rank may be, can become an exorcist. Nor do indigent ladies hesitate to enter the ranks of fortune-tellers. It is an easy, lucrative and graceful form of labour, and contains an element of adventure that appeals strongly to some people.

But a higher form of labour to which a lady is eligible is that of physician; in fact, no woman can be a physician here unless she belongs to the upper class. The science of medicine, or I should say *a* science of medicine, has received much attention from Koreans for many centuries. The Korean pharmacopœia is celebrated even in China; and it cannot be denied that it contains many crude drugs that are very effective. Korea has many native lady physicians who administer their powdered tiger's-claw, tincture of bear's gall or decoction of crow's foot, according as the symptoms of the patient may seem to require. The lady physician is called in most often for obstetric cases where a male physician would not be tolerated for a moment. A story is told of a certain queen who was taken ill and no lady physician could be found. The royal patient grew rapidly worse. Male physicians were at hand, but they could not possibly see the patient. Suddenly there appeared an old man at the palace gate who said that he could cure the queen. When asked how he could diagnose the case without seeing the patient, he said,

"Tie a string around her wrist and pass one end through the partition." It was done, and the old man holding the end of the string described her symptoms exactly and wrote out a prescription which soon effected a cure. Compared with this, the recent discoveries of Marconi in wireless telegraphy seem — but we must not digress.

As might be supposed, a descent in the social scale widens the field of the Korean woman's work. The middle-class woman can engage in all the occupations of her higher sister, excepting those of physician and teacher of Chinese literature. She may be the proprietress of any kind of shop, though she will not appear in person. She may "take in washing," which means carrying it to the nearest brook or to the neighbourhood well-curb, where the water she uses speedily finds its way back into the well. She may act as cook in some well-to-do family, tend the fowls and pigs or do any other form of domestic service. Concubines are drawn almost exclusively from this middle class. They make combs, head-bands, tobacco-pouches and a thousand other little conveniences of the toilet, the wardrobe and the home in general. They are allowed certain fishing rights as well, though they are restricted to the taking of clams, cuttle-fish and beche-de-mer. The women on the island of Quelpart, off the southern coast, held until lately a peculiar position in this matter of fishing. The men stayed at home while the women waded into the sea or swam out from shore and gathered clams, pearl oysters and seaweed. As the women were always nude, there was a strict law that no man was to go within sight of the fishing grounds during the fishing hours. So these modern Godivas were the bread-winners, and as such claimed exceptional privileges, — so much so that the island bade fair to become a sort of gynecocracy. But this was all changed when Japanese fishermen appeared off the island. The women were driven out of business and the men sadly went to work. This dependence upon the women for a living was thoroughly in accord with the earliest tradition of the island, which says that three sages came

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up from a hole in the ground and that each of them found a chest, floating in from the southeast, containing a colt, a dog, a calf, a pig and a woman!

Women of the middle class often become wet-nurses or enter a Buddhist convent, though by following the latter course they drop from the respectable class to the despised one. Others still become *nain*, or palace women. These are in some sort hand-maidens of the queen and engage in embroidery and other fancy work under the eye of Majesty. Foreigners often make the mistake of supposing that this position is a disgraceful one, but these palace women are entirely respectable, and any delinquency on their part would be severely dealt with. The reluctance with which parents consent to their daughters becoming palace women is due to the fact that it postpones the date of marriage beyond the approved age. Many middle-class women are innkeepers. Travel on Korean roads usually averages thirty miles a day, and so the inns are numerous. The hostess has little difficulty in keeping the accounts. All she has to do is to watch the rice-bag and the bean-bag, for food and fodder are the only things charged for in a Korean inn. Sleeping and stable room are thrown in gratis; and we may add *sotto voce* that they are dear even at that price, at certain seasons of the year. If the hostess had to take charge of the sleeping arrangements, she would be unable to preserve the seclusion which is the sole badge of her respectability. Of all these occupations of middle-class women, there are only two to which low-class women are not eligible, those of palace woman and tobacco-pouch maker.

While middle-class women are thoroughly respectable, at least in theory, the women of the low class are entirely outside the social pale. They have practically no rights, though they manage to hold their own with remarkable pertinacity.

There are, first, those unfortunates called dancing-girls. The northern province of Pyeng-an takes the lead in supplying women to fill the ranks of this class. The girls are taken when very young and trained in all the meretricious arts of their

degraded and degrading occupation. Some of them are secured by purchase and many more by chicanery. They are secured at too early an age to make it possible for them to give intelligent assent to their shameful fate. They are never veiled, and they go about as freely as men. In the Korean view they are unsexed and are social outcasts, but in reality, like the *hetairai* of ancient Greece, they enjoy far more social life than reputable women. The dancing-girl is not necessarily a woman of bad character. Many are the stories told of their kindness, charity and patriotism. And yet, if the estimate of their own countrymen counts for anything, such goodness is about as frequent as the Greek kalends. In early days there were no dancing-girls, but boys performed the dances. In course of time, however, a weakening of the moral fibre of the nation, due to increase of luxury, let in this unspeakable evil. The dancing-girl is a *protégé* of the government; in fact, the whole clan is supported out of government funds, and they are supposed to perform only at government functions. They do not by any means constitute that branch of society which in Western countries goes under the euphemistic name of *demi monde,* but they correspond very closely to our ballet-dancers. As with the *hetairai* of Greece, so with the Korean dancing-girl, her greater freedom gives her opportunity and leisure to acquire a culture that makes her intellectually far more companionable than her more secluded but more respectable sisters. This is, of course, a great injustice. Though there is nominally a wide difference between the dancing-girl and the ordinary courtesan, it is generally understood that enrolment in the ranks of this profession means a life of shame. Such women frequently close their professional careers by becoming the concubines of wealthy gentlemen.

The female jugglers, acrobats, contortionists and story-tellers are sufficiently described by their names. None of them are respectable people. The *mudang,* or sorceress, is much in evidence in Korea. She is the lowest of the low; for, in addition to an entire lack of morals, she is supposed to have commerce

with evil spirits. The *p'ansu,* or blind exorcist, is an enemy of the spirits and drives them away by a superior power, but the *mudang* is supposed to secure their departure by friendly intercession. This, of course, determines her unenviable position, and no women in Korea are more depraved than she.

Female slavery is very common. This will be discussed under the head of slavery, but as it is an exclusively female institution, it must be enumerated here. She may be a born slave, she may be made one as punishment for a crime, either of her own or of a near relative, or she may sell herself into lifelong or temporary slavery in order to liquidate a debt or to help a relative to do so. Her condition is somewhat better than that of many of Korea's poor, for she is sure of food and shelter, which is far more than thousands can say. As a rule, she is treated well, and her condition does not specially excite our pity. She will be seen carrying water home from the well on her head, and not only will her face be uncovered, but there will be a startling hiatus between her short jacket and her waistband which leaves the breasts entirely exposed. One recent writer on Korea leaves the impression that this species of indecorum is characteristic of all women on the streets of Seoul, but of course this is a libel.

The professional go-between, who acts in the capacity of a matrimonial bureau, is one of the peculiar excrescences on the body politic of Korea. It is her business to find brides for the bachelors and husbands for the maidens. Her services are not absolutely necessary, for the parents or other relatives of the young man or woman are usually able to arrange an alliance; but there are many cases in which her services will be of value. If an undesirable young man or woman fears that he or she will not draw a prize in the matrimonial lottery, the *chungma* is called in, and it is made worth her while to find an acceptable partner. So it comes about that she is well worth watching, and her description of the prospective bride or groom should be verified, if possible, by ocular evidence. A case has just

come under my notice in which a nice young girl was sadly cheated. Her relatives went to see the young man that the go-between had provided and found him handsomely dressed and living, apparently, in a fine house; but when the ceremony was over he took her to a wretched hovel, where his father and mother and a large family lived huddled together like rabbits in a burrow. The deception was a most cruel one, for the girl had been reared in comparative luxury. Occasionally the go-between is brought to justice for such felonious dealing, but usually the girl would rather suffer in silence than have her name dragged before the public.

It is difficult to estimate the wages that female labour receives in Korea, because it depends almost entirely upon the skill and the rapidity with which the work is done. Doubtless the dancing-girl gets the best pay of all, and next to her perhaps the lady physician. Then come the acrobats and fortune-tellers. The wet-nurse, or "milk-mother," is well paid, but her living is precarious. The same is true of the go-between. The teacher in a gentleman's family gets no salary at all, only a present now and then. The female physician gets her chair-coolie hire and about a dollar for each visit. The acrobat may get as low as four dollars a month or as high as sixty. The fortune-teller gets eight cents for each fortune that she tells. This represents two hours' work, for it is no light matter to be turned off by a mere glance at the palm. Go-betweens get from four to eight dollars for each case. The honest ones are, of course, the surest to find steady employment. The woman whose province it is to apply cosmetics to the faces of prospective brides receives some sixteen dollars for each operation, and anyone who has seen a Korean bride in her stucco will say the money is well earned.

A good seamstress or comb-maker or head-band maker will earn a dollar a day, while a wet nurse will get forty cents and her food, but if a foreigner wants to employ one, he will have to pay twenty dollars a month and support her lazy husband into

the bargain. For sewing, weaving, fishing, doctoring, glazing pottery, preparing ginseng, boiling salt, making shoes, exorcism and many other forms of labour, a woman receives as much as a man. It may be set down as a general law that if a woman can make a thing as quickly and as well as a man she will receive the same wages as he. In this respect the Korean woman has the advantage of the female artisan in Europe or America.

The relative degree of education enjoyed by Korean women as compared with men is not thoroughly understood by foreigners, judging from what we find in print. It is commonly believed that education here is almost wholly confined to the men, but this estimate must be considerably modified. Among Korean gentlemen there are very few indeed who have not studied at least a few Chinese characters, but not one in six can pick up a book written in pure Chinese and read it with any degree of fluency. Most of them have the merest smattering of it. Among the women of the upper class, perhaps two in five study a little Chinese, but not more than one per cent of these ladies ever learn to read it. The so-called mixed script in which the daily papers are printed can be read by very many ladies, for it requires no knowledge of the Chinese idiom, but only the meaning of some eighteen hundred characters. The native Korean writing, of which we speak at length elsewhere, is often called the "ladies' writing." Gentlemen pretend to despise it, but it is well known and extensively used by all Korean ladies. If one of them is lacking in this accomplishment, she will be looked upon much as a Western lady would be who should refer to George Eliot as a gentleman. Among the middle classes perhaps half of the women are conversant with this native script. Among the low class there is no education at all, except in the case of fortune-tellers and dancing-girls, the latter of whom are frequently quite well up in letters.

The one work that Korean women must master is "The Three Principles of Conduct." These are (1) the treatment

of parents, (2) the rearing of a family, (3) housekeeping; and, running the risk of seeming out of date, we submit that, while these three studies might not constitute a liberal education for a woman, no woman's education is complete without them. But while we cannot praise the Koreans too highly for insisting on these, we do blame them that they often stop here. Many women who cannot read learn this book by proxy. It is written in Chinese and Korean on alternate pages, so that no one may have an excuse for not reading it.

Next comes "The Five Rules of Conduct," relating to the relations between parent and child, king and subject, husband and wife, old and young, friend and friend. Then there is a book on "Interesting and Proper Things," a mass of anecdotes illustrative of the virtues, and the "Female Physician's Remedy Book," a sort of domestic medical work, dealing mainly with prenatal conditions, parturition and the care of infants. Such are the most important books studied by women, and ignorance of their contents is looked upon with great contempt among the upper classes and to a less extent among the middle classes. But besides these, there is an extensive literature in the native script alone. It contains historical works on ancient and medieval Korea, poetry, travel, letters, biographies and a wide range of fiction, based on fairies, ghosts, love, hate, revenge, avarice, ambition, adventure, loyalty and all other passions that are common to the race.

Those books which women regularly study can be obtained by purchase, but, as for the light literature, there are a number of circulating libraries in Seoul where books are lent for two cents apiece, to be returned within five days. It speaks rather poorly for the taste and morals of the Koreans that very many of these books are highly unfit for anyone to read.

There are no girls' schools in Korea, outside those that have been founded by the foreign missionaries. That Korean girls are taught almost exclusively those things that will be of practical use to them within the walls of their own homes, is neces-

sarily narrowing to the intellect, and makes the woman a companion to her husband only in a domestic sense. The influence that this has upon society is too well known to need discussion here; but it is the testimony of foreigners generally, who have had to do with Korean girls, that these long centuries of repression have not impaired their mental capacity. That capacity has simply lain dormant, and when given the opportunity it will prove itself easily equivalent to that of the men.

It would be impossible to discuss the property rights of women without taking up property rights in general, which we will do as briefly as possible.

Let us take the case of a well-to-do gentleman in his home, surrounded by his family, which includes his wife, his two married sons and one unmarried daughter. His other daughter has married and gone to the home of her husband. This gentleman's property consists of rice-fields, real estate and ready money. All real estate is held by deed from the government, as with us. His ready money is not in the bank, for there are practically no banks. It is all locked in his strong box, or it is lent out to merchants and others at a rate of one and a half or two per cent a month. Considering the risks, this is a low rate. So far as his own immediate household is concerned, this man has complete control of all this property, but if he has one or more brothers and they happen to be in needy circumstances, he is bound to feed them. If he refuses to do so, they can go to the local authorities and lay complaint against him; in which case they may command him to hand over some of his money or other property to the brothers, in order to save them from starvation. If, however, he can prove that the brothers are indolent and merely want to live upon him, he will be freed from all obligation. The reason for this law will appear shortly.

If he has sisters, they are of course married and have gone to the family of the husband. He is, therefore, free from all legal obligation to them. In case they are in severe straits, he

will probably help them, but they have no recourse to law. If his aged mother is still living, he must support her. If he does not treat her well, she has instant recourse to the law and can inflict the severest penalties. If he insults her or strikes her or if he is a thief or seditious, she might strike him dead and the law would uphold her. This is not mere theory, for such things have happened not infrequently. So long as he treats her well, she has no voice in the management of the money. It is hardly necessary to say that the government exercises the right of eminent domain, and can "condemn" and take any man's property at a fair valuation.

We next ask how a Korean can acquire or dispose of property. In the disposition of the estate his brothers may act as a check upon him. If he is wantonly squandering the patrimony, or even money that he has himself acquired, they can complain to the authorities and ask them to refuse new deeds for property that he sells. It must always be remembered that in Korea the authorities are seldom approached with empty hands, and to go to law does not necessarily mean to obtain justice.

When a man dies intestate, all his property goes into the hands of his eldest son, who is obliged to support all his brothers. If he refuses to do so, they appeal to the law and force a division of the property, in which case each receives an equal share. If there are unmarried sisters, the elder brother will lay aside a sum sufficient for their dowries, himself being the judge as to what is necessary. These unmarried sisters have no recourse to the law, so long as their brother supports them and gives them a home. If he refuses this, the law will handle him. If they are already married before the death of the father, the brother is not under obligation to give them anything. If they are in want, he may help them or not as he pleases.

A man, seeing his end approach, desires to make his will. He calls in a few witnesses, never from his own immediate family, and writes his will in their presence. They sign it in due form. There is no such thing as probate in Korea, and the

eldest son is always the executor of the will. Ordinarily, the father will have no doubt as to his son's good intentions and will die intestate. It is when the father fears that the son will not treat the rest of the family well that he makes a will. Supposing that the will specifies that the widow is to receive a specified sum, and the other children each a specified sum, every person so specified has the right to claim at law the amount bequeathed to him or her, and the woman's right is as clear as the man's. But should the will include a bequest to anyone not a relative, such as a friend, or the poor, or a monk, such person cannot recover the money at law. There is no redress. If, however, the executor, the eldest son, refuses to carry out the wishes of his father in these particulars and shows a too avaricious spirit, the people of the place will compel him to sell out and move away. They will drive him from the neighbourhood, and the authorities will not stir a finger to help him, unless — but the less said about that the better.

Now let us suppose that a man dies leaving only two daughters, one married and the other unmarried. In this case the great probability is that he will adopt a son before he dies, someone among his near relatives. This will be mainly in order to have someone to sacrifice to his spirit after his death. The adopted son has all the rights and powers of a real son, and will control the property. Perhaps once out of ten times the father will fail to adopt a son, in which case the daughters take charge of the property and administer the estate exactly the same as a man would, and with equal power. These daughters are not obliged to hand the property over to their husbands unless they wish, but the husband may, if evil-minded, seize it, in which case the wife will probably have no redress. This, however, would very rarely occur, for, if it were known, the man would be subject to the most bitter scorn of his acquaintances and would be practically ostracised.

In case a man dies leaving only a widow, she will adopt as her son the eldest son of one of her husband's brothers, and he

will naturally have charge of the money. This is a hard and fast rule that is never broken. If there be no such nephew, she may adopt some other boy, if she so desires, or she can hold the property in her own name. If her husband has a childless brother, she must divide the property with him, but not with any more distant relative.

It is a striking fact that among the common people a wife has greater power over her dead husband's property than her more aristocratic sister. If she adopts a son, she still may control the estate if she desires. The Koreans have a queer saying to the effect that to live well in this world one should be the wife of a middle-class man, and when a woman dies she should wish to be reincarnated in the shape of a gentleman or high-class man. This is because in the middle class the woman is more nearly on a level with her husband, she knows more about his business and has more to say in the management of the family affairs than the high-class woman; also she has a much firmer hold upon her husband's estate in case he dies. She is not so strictly bound to adopt a son to whom she will have to hand over the property, nor does she have to give so much to her deceased husband's brothers.

As we descend in the social scale, all restrictive laws and all inequalities between the sexes are toned down, so that when we reach the lowest classes we find that the relations are much the same as in our own land. The Koreans say that among the very lowest classes are to be found the most unfortunate and the most fortunate women; but this would not be our estimate, for the Koreans mean by this that the *mudang,* or sorceress, and the courtesan and the dancing-girl, being unmarried, are the most independent women in the land, and are cared for, fed and dressed the best of any in Korea. Of course this is a terribly false judgment, for it looks merely to material comfort and forgets the awful price at which it is bought. On the other hand, the respectable woman of the lowest orders is the most pitiable, for she is everybody's drudge. She has no rights that anyone

is bound to respect, and she lives at the caprice of her husband or master.

The question arises as to whether a married woman has control of the wages which she may earn. In this respect the middle-class woman has the advantage of her higher sisters, for while a gentleman's wife will invariably turn over the proceeds of her work to her husband, the middle-class woman may or may not do so. Every act of a high-born woman is subject to far closer scrutiny than in the case of the middle-class woman, and, as she can never go to a shop to buy anything, she cannot well use her money. On the whole, she is a very helpless being. It is very common for middle-class women to give up their wages to their husbands, and the latter can take money from their wives by force without the least fear of molestation from the authorities; but by sufferance these women are given greater freedom than others.

If a widow is possessed of considerable property and sees her end approach, and she has neither sons nor near relatives, she may give her money to some young man and ask him to perform the annual sacrificial rites for her, or she may go to a Buddhist monastery and give her money to pay for the performance of Buddhist rites. This is a very common occurrence in Korea, and forms an important part of the income of the monasteries. No woman of the upper class ever does this.

If a man is a traitor or if he desecrates a grave, the common custom, until very recently, has been to decapitate him and all his male relatives of near degree, and to execute by poison all women of his immediate family, namely, mother, wife and daughters. In certain cases the women may merely be made slaves. If a woman herself meditates treason, she will be poisoned. For murder a man is decapitated and his wife poisoned. If a woman is the offender, she will be strangled or poisoned. For arson a man suffers strangulation or poisoning, while the woman suffers the latter penalty. For theft a man may be either decapitated, strangled or banished. His wife will be enslaved

and all his property confiscated. Such was the law up to the year 1895, but at that time the punishment of wives and daughters for the man's fault was done away, and a great forward step was thus taken in judicial ethics. Since that time only the principal offender himself has suffered punishment.

In the matter of divorce the great inequality between the sexes becomes plainly manifest. On no pretext whatever can a woman obtain a legal separation from her husband. The only thing she can do is to run away to her father's house or to that of some relative. In this case the husband has no redress unless he can disprove her charges against him. In such case he can demand not her person, but only the cost of the marriage ceremony. This proving is not done by legal process, but is a matter between the parties concerned and their relatives. The law will not force a woman to go back to her husband's home. Thus we see that divorce in its main feature, namely, the getting rid of a bad husband, is possible to any Korean woman, but there is no legal document which dissolves the marriage tie.

If a man wants to get rid of his wife, the reason will probably be either that she is barren, or that she has committed adultery, or that she is an inveterate gossip, or that she has insulted him, or that she is indolent, or that she does not attend properly to the sacrifices or that she is a thief. If the woman thus divorced is a lady, she has absolutely no redress, whether the accusation is just or not. If she is a common woman, she can appeal to the Mayor of Seoul or to her local magistrate and can have her husband punished for driving her away without sufficient cause if she can prove that such is the case. If a woman is divorced, or if she runs away from her husband, all the children remain in his care. She cannot take any of them with her unless by his permission. If she clandestinely does so, he can force her to give the child up.

Divorce is very uncommon among the upper class. The wife and mistress of the house is by no means a mere chattel, as in Turkey or Persia. She has certain well-defined rights

that her husband is bound to respect, and to divorce her requires very sound and patent reasons. She has her powerful relatives who could make it very uncomfortable for her husband should he attempt to discredit their house by wantonly divorcing her. It is a terrible disgrace for a gentleman to have his wife run away from him, and he will go far to conciliate her and prevent such a scandal. Among the common people, however, there is far greater license. Divorce is exceedingly easy and common. If a man finds that the woman of his choice (or the go-between's choice) is not what he anticipated, he will simply send her home to her mother. It is very uncommon for a woman to complain before the magistrate and have her delinquent husband punished, for in any case she cannot go back to him, and so the less said about the matter the better. The utmost promiscuity prevails among the lower classes. A man may have half a dozen wives a year in succession. No ceremony is required, and it is simply a mutual agreement of a more or less temporary nature. The biblical picture of the Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well who had had five husbands is descriptive of many thousands among the low-class people in Korea.

The cost of a regular wedding in this country is very great, averaging some six months' income. This is one of the main reasons for irregular connections.

Concubinage is an institution as old as history. It has existed in Korea from time immemorial. There are three main causes for it, — if a man has no son by his wife, if the wife is an invalid or a cripple or old, if the man is a mere libertine; in any of these cases he is likely to take a concubine. The custom is prevalent both among the high class and the middle class. The woman of the high class never becomes a concubine, but men of that class take concubines from the lower strata of society. From time to time we hear excuses made for concubinage in the case of a man whose wife is barren, but the excuse is not a valid one; and for the very good reason that however many sons a man may have by a concubine, not one of them can call

him father, or become his heir or sacrifice to him after death. He may have half a dozen sons by concubines, yet when the time comes to die he will adopt a son from some more or less distant branch of the family, and it is this adopted son who will call him father, worship him after death and inherit all his property. The sons of concubines have no rights whatever, nor would any gentleman think of adopting his son by a concubine to be his legal heir. Great stress is laid upon purity of blood in the upper class. Among the common people, however, where the restraints are very much less, the son by a concubine may become the heir. In such case the man and his concubine belong to the same grade of society. The children always take the status of the mother.

If a man of the upper class has one or more concubines, he must keep a separate establishment for each of them. It would be unheard of for a gentleman to introduce a concubine into the home where his genuine wife lives. Among the common class, however, the wife and the concubine may occupy the same house. Human nature is the same the world over, and it is needless to say that oftentimes the result is most distressing. No other one thing is so conducive to domestic discord as this evil custom. The Koreans recognise its baneful effects and condemn it, but money and leisure offer great temptations in Korea even as elsewhere.

The commonest form of amusement in which women indulge is called *kugyung*. This word cannot be exactly translated, but it may mean to " look see " or to " take a walk," or both of these combined. In other words, it means the satisfaction of curiosity in any form. When the Korean says *kugyung kapsita,* he means, " Let us take a stroll and look about a bit." Now, this, in the uneventful life of a Korean woman, is one of the highest forms of pleasure. It makes no difference though she sees nothing more exciting than a passing bicycle or electric car. It is amusing and entertaining. Of course, such pleasures are mostly limited to the lower classes, who are less secluded. Ladies amuse

themselves by playing the *komungo,* or harp. Its musical capabilities are not high. They also play other crude instruments.

Korean girls are very fond of swinging, and on a certain day in spring there is a swing festival in which men, women and children participate. Huge swings are arranged in public places, but these are used only by men and boys. Girls have a peculiar kind of see-saw, which consists of a short board laid across a fulcrum three or four inches high. The girls stand on opposite ends of the board and jump up and down. The impact of one coming down throws the other up into the air some three or four feet. A rope is drawn above their heads like a clothes-line, and to this they cling as they go up in the air, in order to insure their equilibrium.

In the country the girls enjoy what is called the *chul nori,* or rope game. A rope is drawn taut between two trees, and the girls swing back and forth against it, keeping time to a song. The Korean doll is also very common and is called a *kaksi.* It is most often seen tied to the back of the little girl, and she pretends that she is carrying her baby as her mother does the genuine one. Dominoes, go-bang and dice are favourite amusements of women, though the last are used almost exclusively by ladies of the higher class.

As for titles, only ladies of the very highest class, wives of the leading officials, are given a " handle " to their names. These correspond to our terms " countess," " baroness " and others; but these titles are not hereditary in Korea.

CHAPTER XXIX

FOLK-LORE

FOLK-LORE is a very ambiguous term, including at one extreme not only the folk-tales of a people, but the folk-songs, superstitions, charms, incantations, proverbs, conundrums and many other odds and ends of domestic tradition which find no classification under other headings. Folk-lore is the back attic, to which are relegated all those interesting old pieces of ethnological furniture which do not bear the hall-mark of history and are withal too ambiguous in their origin and too heterogeneous in their character to take their place downstairs in the prim order of the modern scientific drawing-room. But if we wish to feel as well as to know what the life of a people has been, we must not sit down in the drawing-room under the electric light and read their annals simply, but we must mount to the attic and rummage among their folk-lore, handle, as it were, the garments of bygone days and untie the faded ribbon which confines the love-letters of long ago. Written history stalks across the centuries in seven-league boots, leaping from one great crisis to another, and giving but a bird's-eye view of what lies between; but folk-lore takes you by the hand, leads you down into the valley, shows you the home, the family, the every-day life, and brings you close to the heart of the people. It has been well said that the test of a man's knowledge of a foreign language is his ability to understand the jokes in that language. So I should say that to know a people's life we must understand their folk-lore.

The back attic of Korean folk-lore is filled with a very miscellaneous collection, for the same family has occupied the house for forty centuries and there never has been an auction.

Of this mass of material, in the small space here available, we can give only the merest outline, a rapid inventory.

For convenience we may group Korean folk-tales under six heads, — Confucian, Buddhistic, shamanistic, legendary, mythical and general.

Williams defines Confucianism as "the political morality which was taught by Confucius and his disciples and which forms the basis of Chinese jurisprudence. It can hardly be called a religion, as it does not inculcate the worship of any god." In other words, it stops short at ethical boundaries and does not concern itself with spiritual relations. The point at issue between Confucianism and Buddhism is that the latter affirms that the present life is conditioned by a past one and determines the condition in a future one, while Confucianism confines itself to the deciding of questions of conduct beginning with birth and ending with death. It is to be expected, therefore, that, like Judaism in the days of its decadence, every probable phase and aspect of human life will be discussed, and a rule of conduct laid down. This is done largely by allegory, and we find in Korea, as in China, a mass of stories illustrating the line of conduct to be followed under a great variety of circumstances. These stories omit all mention of the more recondite tenets of Confucianism, and deal exclusively with the application of a few self-evident ethical principles of conduct. They all cluster about and are slavish imitations of a printed volume of stories called the *O-ryun Hang-sil*, or "The Five Principles of Conduct." This has been borrowed mainly from China, and the tales it contains are as conventional and as insipid as any other form of Chinese inspiration. As this is a written volume which has a definite place in literature, it may not perhaps be considered strictly as folk-lore, but the great number of tales based on it, giving simple variations of the same threadbare themes, have become woven into the fabric of Korean folk-lore and have produced a distinct impression, but rather of an academic than a genuinely moral character. Following the lead of this book, Korean folk-

lore has piled example upon example showing how a child, a youth or an adult should act under certain given circumstances. These "Five Principles" may be called the five beatitudes of Confucianism, and while their author would probably prefer to word them differently, the following is the way they work out in actual Korean life:

(1) Blessed is the child who honours his parents, for he in turn shall be honoured by his children.

(2) Blessed is the man who honours his King, for he will stand a chance of being a recipient of the King's favour.

(3) Blessed are the man and wife who treat each other properly, for they shall be secure against domestic scandal.

(4) Blessed is the man who treats his friend well, for that is the only way to get treated well himself.

(5) Blessed is the man who honours his elders, for years are a guarantee of wisdom.

Then there are minor ones which are in some sense corollaries of these five, as, for instance:

Blessed is the very chaste woman, for she shall have a red gate built in her front yard, with her virtues described thereon, to show that the average of womanhood is a shade less virtuous than she.

Blessed is the country gentleman who persistently declines to become prime minister, even though pressed to do so, for he shall never be cartooned by the opposition — and incidentally shall have no taxes to pay.

Blessed is the young married woman who suffers patiently the infliction of a mother-in-law, for she in turn shall have the felicity of pinching her own daughter-in-law black and blue without remonstrance.

Blessed is the man who treats his servant well, for instead of being squeezed a hundred cash on a string of eggs he will be squeezed only seventy-five.

Korean lore abounds in stories of good little boys and girls who never steal bird's-nests, nor play "for keeps," nor tear

their clothes, nor strike back, nor tie tin cans to dogs' tails. They form what we may call the "Sunday-school literature" of the Koreans, and they are treated with the same contempt by the healthy Korean boy or girl as goody-goody talk is treated by normal children the world over.

While these stories are many in number, they are built on a surprisingly small number of models. After one gets used to the formulæ, the first few lines of a story reveal to him the whole plot, including commencement, complications, climax, catastrophe and conclusion. For instance, there is the stock story of the boy whose parents treated him in a most brutal manner but who never made a word of complaint. Anticipating that they will end by throwing him into the well, he goes down one dark night by the aid of a rope and digs a side passage in the earth just above the surface of the water; and so when he is thrown in headlong the following day, he emerges from the water and crawls into this retreat unknown to his doting parents, who fondly imagine they have made all arrangements for his future. About the middle of the afternoon he crawls out, and faces his astonished parents with a sanctimonious look on his face, which, from one point of view, attests his filial piety, but from another says, "You dear old humbugs! You can't get rid of me so easily as that." Be it noted, however, that the pathos of this story lies in its exaggerated description of how Korean children are sometimes treated.

We also have the case of the beautiful widow, the Korean Lucrece, who, when the King importuned her to enter his harem, seized a knife and cut off her own nose, thus ruining her beauty. Who can doubt that she knew that by this bold stroke she could retire on a fat pension and become the envy of all future widows?

Then there was the boy whose father lay dying of hunger. The youth whetted a knife, went in to his father's presence, cut a generous piece of flesh from his own thigh and offered it to his parent. The story takes no account of the fact that the old reprobate actually turned cannibal instead of dying like a decent

gentleman. The Koreans seem quite unable to see this moving episode in more than one light, and they hold up their hands in wondering admiration, while all the time the story is exquisitely ironical.

There are numerous stories of the Lear type, where the favourite children desert their parent, while the one who had been the drudge turns out pure gold. There is quite a volume of Cinderella stories in which proud daughters come to grief in the brambles and have their faces scratched beyond repair, while the neglected one is helped by the elves and goblins and in the sequel takes her rightful place. But these stories are often marred by the careless way in which the successful one looks upon the suffering and perhaps the death of her humbled rivals.

Another common theme is that of the girl who refuses to marry any other man than the one, perhaps a beggar, whom her father had jokingly suggested as a possible husband for her. The prevailing idea in this is that the image once formed in a maiden's mind of her future husband is, in truth, already her husband, and she must be faithful to him. Such stories are a gauge of actual domestic life in Korea *inversely* to the degree of their exaggeration.

A favourite model is that of the boy who spends his whole patrimony on his father's funeral and becomes a beggar, but after a remarkable series of adventures turns up Prime Minister of the land. But in actual Korean life it has never been noted that contempt for money is a leading characteristic of officialdom. Far from it. There is also the type of the evil-minded woman who was found weeping upon her husband's grave, but when asked why she was inconsolable, she replied that she was moistening the grave with her tears so that the grass would grow the sooner, for only then could she think of marrying again.

Korea is rich in tales of how a man's honour or a woman's virtue has been called in question, and just as the fatal moment came the blow was averted by some miraculous vindication; as when a hairpin tossed into the air fell and pierced the solid

rock, or an artery was severed and the blood ran white as milk, or the cart which was to carry the traduced but innocent official to his execution could not be moved an inch, even by seven yoke of oxen, until the superscription "traitor" was changed to that of "patriot."

These are but a few of the standard models, and in examining them we find that they are all highly exaggerated cases, the inference apparently being that the greater includes the less, and that if boys and girls, youths and maidens, men and women, acted with virtue and discretion under these extreme circumstances, how much more should the reader do so under less trying conditions. But the result is that, as Confucianism proposes no adequate motive for such altruistic conduct and provides no adequate punishment for delinquency, the stories are held in a sort of contemptuous tolerance without the least attempt to profit by them or to apply them to actual conduct. This tendency is well illustrated in another phase of Korean life. When asked why his people do not try to emulate the example of the West in industrial achievements, the Korean points to the distant past and cites the case of Yi Sun-sin, who made the first iron-clad war-ship mentioned in history; and he actually believes Korea has beaten the world, though Korea to-day does not possess even a single fourth-class gunboat. Even so they point to these fantastic tales to illustrate the tone of Korean society, when, in truth, these principles are as obsolete as the once famous tortoise boat.

It should be noted that while the models given in the "Five Rules of Conduct" are mostly from the Chinese, yet a vast number of the tales which are based on these and which pass from mouth to mouth, are purely Korean in their setting. The Confucian imprint is there, but translated into terms of Korean life and feeling.

I have already hinted that the more recondite and esoteric ideas of Confucianism are entirely waved aside and only the practical application is brought to the fore. It is to this fact

that we must attribute the virility of Confucian ethics as a code, even though there be no effort to live up to it. These ideas are such as belong to every religion and every civilisation, and it is just because they are fundamental principles of all human society that they survive, at least, as a recognised standard. They are axiomatic, and to deny them would be to disregard the plainest dictates of common sense.

These stories form, as I have said, the "Sunday-school" literature of the Koreans, and they are taken, as in the West, by a select few on select occasions. Everyone knows about them and has a general familiarity with their contents, just as every Western child knows about David and Goliath, Jonah and the whale, Daniel and the lions; but just as in the Western nursery Mother Goose, Cinderella, Jack the Giant-killer, Alice in Wonderland and the Brownies are more in evidence than religious tales, so in Korea the dragon or fox story, the ipp and elf and goblin story, are told far oftener than the tales illustrative of Confucian ethics.

When we come to Buddhistic stories, we find a larger volume and a wider range. Being a mystical religion, Buddhism gives a much wider play to the imagination; being a spectacular religion, it gives opportunity for greater dramatic effect; carrying the soul beyond the grave and postulating a definite system of rewards and punishments, it affords a much broader stage for its characters to play their parts upon. The Confucian tales are short, intended each to point some particular moral, and conciseness is desirable; but with the Buddhistic tales it is different. The plots are often long and intricate, the interrelation of human events is more carefully worked out and the play of human passions is given more extended illustration. They approach much closer to what we would call genuine fiction than do the Confucian tales. The latter are mere anecdotes, and afford no such stimulus to the imagination as the Buddhistic stories do.

Another reason why Buddhist tales are so common is that Buddhism was predominant in the peninsula for a period of

over a thousand years, and antedated the general spread of Confucianism by many centuries. Coming in long before literature, as such, had made any headway in the peninsula, Buddhism took a firm hold upon all ranks of society, determined the mould into which the thought of the nation should be poured, and gained an ascendency over the Korean imagination which has never been successfully disputed. It is probable that at the present time three stories hinge upon Buddhism, where one draws its motive from Confucian principles. The former cult entered Korea about three centuries after Christ, but it was not until 1100 A. D. that there was any serious rivalry between it and Confucianism. By that time Buddhism had moulded Korean fancy to its own shape, and had constituted itself some sort of substitute for genuine religion; but Confucianism never went deeper than the reason, and so the former cult, by the priority of its occupancy and by its deeper touch, made an impression that the latter code of morals has never been able to efface.

Another cause of the survival of Buddhistic ideas, especially in folk-lore, even after Confucianism became nominally the state religion, was that the latter gave such an inferior place to women. Buddhism makes no such invidious comparisons. The very nature of the cult forbids it, and Korean history is full of incidents showing that women were equal sharers in what were believed to be the benefits of religion. Confucianism, on the other hand, gave woman a subordinate place, afforded no outlet to her religious aspirations, and made child-bearing her only service. It is a literary cult, a scholastic religion, and women are debarred from its most sacred arcana. They retorted by clinging the closer to Buddhism, where they found food for their devotional instincts, albeit the superstition was Egyptian in its darkness. In this they were not opposed. Confucianism, the man's religion, seemed to fancy that by letting despised woman grovel in the darkness its own prestige would be enhanced. The fact remains that one of the most striking peculiarities about Korean society to-day is that while the men are all nominal Confucian-

ists, the women are nearly all Buddhists, or at least devotees of one or other of those forms of superstition into which Buddhism has merged itself in the peninsula. What would have become of Buddhism and the monasteries if it had not been for the queens of the present dynasty? Even the last twenty years give abundant evidence of its potent power in the female breast. It is the mothers who mould the children's minds; and every boy's and girl's mind is saturated with Buddhistic or semi-Buddhistic ideas long before the Thousand Character Classic is put into his hands. The imagination and fancy have become enthralled, and, while it is true that in time the boy will be ridiculed into professing contempt for Buddhism, the girl clings to it with a tenacity born of sixteen hundred years of inherited tendency. It is, of course, a modified Buddhism. The basic fetichism and animism which the Korean inherits from untold antiquity has become so thoroughly mixed with his Buddhism that we can hardly tell where the one leaves off and the other begins. We are speaking now of the common folk-tales and not the written literature of the country. The formal writings of the past five centuries are Confucian, and the models have been those of the Chinese sage; but they are not for the mass of the people, and they mean even less to the common crowd than Shakespeare and Milton mean to the average Englishman or American.

I must mention one more reason for the survival of the Buddhist element in Korean folk-tales; that is, its localising tendency. The story plays about some special spot; it clings to its own hallowed *locus,* and without this it would lose force, just as the story of William Tell or King Arthur or Evangeline would suffer if made general as to locality. It is because the Korean can lead you to a mountain-side and say, "Here is where Muhak the monk stood when he pronounced the fatal words that foretold the great invasion," or show you the very tree, now centuries old, that Tosan planted — it is because of these definite local elements that these tales are anchored so firmly in the Korean consciousness. Any Confucian story might have occurred any-

where at any time. But old Diamond Mountain carries as many tales of famous monks as it bears pines, and the shoulders of old Halla Mountain are shrouded in as heavy a cloak of Buddhist lore as of the driving mist from off the southern seas.

The style and make-up of the Buddhistic story are almost infinite in variety. What we may call the inner circle of Buddhist philosophy never appears in these tales, but through them is constantly heard the cry for the release from the bane of existence. The scorn of merely earthly honours is seen on every page. Well indeed might the women of Korea be willing, nay, long, to sink into some *nirvana* and forget their sorrows. Buddhism is consistent at least in this, that it acknowledges the futility of mere existence and says to every man, "What are you here for?"

The plots of Buddhist stories are too long to give *in extenso,* but a few salient points can be indicated. The monastery is the retreat to which the baffled hero retires, and in which he receives his literary and military education, and from it he sallies forth to overthrow the enemies of his country and claim his lawful place before the King. Or, again, a monastery may be the scene of an awful crime which the hero discloses, and thus vindicates the right. There is no witch nor wizard nor fairy godmother in Korea. It is the silent monk who appears at the crucial point and stays the hand of death with a potent drug, or warns the hero of his danger, or tells him how to circumvent his foes. Now and again, like Elijah of old, a monk dares to face the King and charge him with his faults, or give enigmatical advice which delivers the land from some terrible fate. Often a wandering monk is shown a kindness by some boy, and in after years by his mysterious power raises the lad to affluence and fame.

In these days one never connects the idea of scholarship with a Buddhist monastery, but the folk-lore of Korea abounds in stories in which the hero retires to a monastery and learns not only letters but astrology and geomancy. Even military science seems to have been taught in these retreats. From no other

source do we derive so much information about the monasteries in the middle ages as we do from these same stories. While in Europe the monastery was the repository of learning and culture, to which the war-worn veteran retired to do penance for his sanguinary career, in Korea it was the school in which the young man learned the science of war as well.

Folk-lore shows the part that Buddhism has played in determining many other phases of Korean life as seen to-day. Take, for instance, the penal code. The punishments until lately inflicted upon criminals were evidently copied from the representations of the Buddhistic hell. Of course these originally emanated for man's imagination, and one might argue that the horrors of the Buddhist hell are borrowed from the system of punishments in vogue in Korea, were it not that the system was brought complete from India by way of China. The crystallisation of these inhumanities into religious forms has perpetuated the ancient and gruesome horrors, and prevented the advent of humaner forms of punishment commensurate with the general advance in civilisation.

Buddhistic stories have bred in the Korean a repugnance to taking the life of any animal. To make blood flow is beneath the dignity of any decent man, and though Buddhism has been politically under the ban for five centuries, the butcher has, until recently, been counted with the *chilban,* or "seven kinds," which include mountebanks, harlots, slaves and sorceresses. And yet this repugnance to taking life does not prevent the most revolting cruelty to animals of all kinds. Many other points might be cited to show how Buddhist lore has tended to perpetuate ideas that are not only outside the Confucian system but directly antagonistic thereto.

And this brings us to our next point, the antagonism between these two religions. During the whole of the Koryu dynasty (918–1392) a bitter fight was kept up between the adherents of these two cults. No one was then both a Buddhist and a Confucianist, as is quite common to-day. Sanguinary

struggles took place in which Buddhism was uniformly successful; but there was always left the nucleus of an opposition, and in the end, when Buddhism had dragged the nation in the mire and made her contemptible, the Confucian element came to the surface again, and by one bold stroke effected, at least on the surface of things, one of the most sweeping changes that any people has ever experienced, comparable to the French Revolution. This struggle between the two systems could not but leave an indelible mark upon the folk-lore of the country. A volume could be filled with stories illustrating in detail the successes now of one side and now of the other. Once when the Confucian element prevailed and the Buddhist pontifex was condemned to death, he foretold that when his head fell his blood would flow white like milk to vindicate his cause. It turned out even so, and his executioners bowed to the logic of the occasion and reinstated the formerly despised cult. Again a raven was the bearer of a missive to the King bidding him to hasten to the Queen's quarters and shoot an arrow through the zither-case. He obeyed, and found that the arrow had taken effect in the body of the high priest, who had taken advantage of the King's absence to attack the honour of the Queen. In one instance a test was made to see whether Confucian or Buddhistic principles were better able to control the passions. A leading representative of each of the cults were subjected to the blandishments of a courtesan, with the result that Confucianism scored a notable triumph.

So far as we have found, Korean folk-lore accords the palm of victory in a majority of cases to the Buddhist side. This is doubtless because Buddhism made far greater use of folk-tales to impress itself upon the people than did Confucianism. The latter is the more reasonable cult, but Buddhism chose the better, or at least the surer, part by capturing the imagination and monopolising the mystical element which is so prominent in Oriental character. After Confucianism had secured a firm hold upon the government, it cared little what Buddhism did in the moral sphere. All physical contest between them came to an

end, and they became blended in the Korean consciousness in so far as the antipodes can blend. This also has left its mark upon Korean folk-lore. The longest and most thoroughly elaborated stories show Buddhism and Confucianism hand in hand. The former supplies the dramatic element, and the latter the ethical. The motive is Confucian, the action Buddhistic.

Under the head of shamanistic stories I include all tales which hinge upon shamanism, fetichism, animism and the like. They are the stories which appeal to the basic element in the Korean. Before he was a Confucianist, before he was a Buddhist, he was a nature worshipper. True enough, the monk can scare him with his pictures of a physical hell, but it is as nothing to the fear he has of the spirit which inhabits yonder tree on the hillside. The Confucianist can make the chills run up and down his back by an inventory of the evil passions of the heart; but it will not begin to compare with the horror which seizes him when in the middle of the night a weasel overturns a jar in the kitchen, and he feels sure that a *tokgabi* is at work among his lares and penates. The merchant will not be moved by a homily on the duty of fair dealing with one's fellow-men, but he will spend all day spelling out from the calendar a lucky day on which to carry out a plan for "doing" an unwary customer. Countless are the stories based upon these themes. The spirits of mountain, stream, tree, rock or cave play through Korean fiction as the fairy, goblin or genius does through the pages of the "Arabian Nights."

This portion of our theme is of greater interest than almost any other, for while Buddhism and Confucianism are both importations, and bring with them many ideas originally alien to the Korean mind, we have here the product of the indigenous and basic elements of their character. And yet, even after the lapse of so many centuries, it is difficult to segregate the original Korean and the imported Chinese ingredients in these tales; but we may be sure that here if anywhere we shall come near to the genuine Korean.

First come the stories based upon the belief that animals can acquire the power to transform themselves into men. These are among the stories that children love best. There was the wild boar that drank of the water that had lain for twenty years in a human skull, and thus acquired power to assume the human shape, but with this fatal limitation, that if a dog looked him in the face he would be obliged to resume his natural shape. There is the fox which turned into a woman, an Oriental Circe, and worked the destruction of an empire. Now and again a centenarian toad assumes human shape, and acts as valet to the tiger, who is masquerading as a gentleman. A serpent turns into a beautiful maiden and lures a man to the brink of destruction, but, being thwarted, changes its tactics and infests his body with a myriad of little snakes, from which he is delivered by the sparrows, who kindly peck holes in his skin and let the reptiles out. There is a clear line of demarcation between the good and the bad animals. The fox, tiger, wild boar, serpent and toad are always bad, while the rabbit, frog, tortoise and dragon are invariably good. As the tiger is the most destructive animal in Korea, we are not surprised to find a great number of stories, telling how he turned into a girl and came crying to the door of a house in order to lure out its inmates. This is the "bugaboo" story with which Korean children are frightened into obedience.

Many are the wonders worked by the *tokgabis,* the imps that delight to make trouble in the household. No Korean will profess to have seen one or to have been the victim of his tricks, but every Korean knows of someone else who has so suffered. They believe that these imps are the spirits of wicked men who have been refused entrance into the place of the blessed, and have no option but to haunt their former places of abode; or they may be the spirits of good people who have died by violence, or under other painful circumstances, and cannot go to paradise because of the desire of revenge which burns in them. Sometimes they take the shape of a man with the lower half of his body gone,

sometimes that of a flying man or child. At other times they appear in the shape of fire or lightning, or a crash as of thunder.

Many stories are told of how these tormented spirits have leagued themselves with men, promising that the unholy compact will bring riches and power. This corresponds to the witchcraft of the West. By the aid of these familiar spirits many a deed of darkness is done; but the promises always fail, and the man becomes pinched and pale, and he gradually wastes away. It is only by breaking the compact that he can save himself from disaster. The things the *tokgabi* dreads the most are silver, a red colour and a tree that has been struck by lightning. Men may break the spell by hanging about the house cloths dipped in a red dye. This barrier the spirit cannot pass, and after four days of waiting he departs never to come again. His dread of silver reminds us of the superstition in the West, that in order to shoot a ghost one must load the gun with a silver piece as well as the regular charge. If a *tokgabi* seizes a man, it always lays hold of his top-knot; for this reason it is that so many Koreans wear a little silver pin in the end of that ornamental member. If a tree is struck by lightning, the boys of the neighbourhood will hasten to secure splinters of the wood to carry in their pouches as a charm against the fiends.

This meddlesome sprite is a sort of Korean Puck, and any casualty whose cause is not patent is laid at his door. One of his favourite pastimes is to bewitch the rice-kettle and make the cover fall in. The cover is a trifle larger than the kettle's mouth, and the trick would seem to be impossible; but if the cover were cold and the kettle made very hot, the expansion of the metal might make even this possible. This may have occurred once or twice in all the centuries, and it is still cited as evidence of the existence of these imps. The *tokgabi* seldom plays the leading part in a Korean story, but he flits in and out and adds spice to the narrative.

Prominent among the folk-tales are those of the Uncle Remus

type; and it is very commonly the rabbit that outwits his stronger enemies. A wicked tortoise, in search of a rabbit's liver to use as medicine in healing the sea-king's daughter, inveigled a rabbit into riding on his back across the water to an island that the tortoise said was a rabbit's paradise. When well out from shore, the tortoise bade the rabbit prepare to die, for his liver was needed down below. After a moment's thought the rabbit laughed and said: "You might have had it without all this trouble. We are made with removable livers, so that after eating too much we can throw our livers out and wash them and keep them cool. I had just laid mine out to dry when you came, and your story was so fascinating that I forgot the liver entirely. You are welcome to it if you will let me show you where it is." So the rabbit got safely back to shore and had a good laugh at the expense of the tortoise.

Spirits are everywhere, and they turn up on the most unlikely occasion. Even the door-hinges or the chopsticks may be the abode of an imp who has the power to change a man's whole destiny. As a rule, they seem to be on the watch for someone to injure them, for only so can they gain the power they crave. These stories deal with the lowly and humble things of life, and it is in them that Korean humour shows itself to the best advantage. Their influence is very great, and it may be said with some degree of confidence that they define the religion of far more Koreans than do the more high-sounding names of Buddhism and Confucianism. If they had been left to themselves and had not been made the dumping-ground for other people's religions, it is probable that they would have developed some such pantheon as that of the Greeks; but even as it is, we find them worshipping the spirits of grove and rock and mountain with a fervour that neither Buddhism nor Confucianism can arouse.

We will now consider briefly the legends of Korea. Under this heading we include all supernatural or extra-natural incidents, believed by the credulous to form a part of the history

of the country. These stories are always short and pithy and are truly indigenous. Most of them are of great antiquity and antedate any considerable Japanese or Chinese influence.

Many legends deal with the founding of the various dynasties and kingdoms that have flourished here from time to time. We find upon examination that the egg plays a very important part in the origin of ancient heroes. To be sure, the Tangun, the most ancient of all, had another and a unique origin. A bear, by patient waiting in a cave, at the command of the great spirit became a woman. Whan-ung, the son of the Creator, sought and found her, and she bore a son who is known as Tangun, contemporary with Noah. The founder of the great southern kingdom of Silla (57 B. C.–918 A. D.) was brought forth from a gigantic egg that was found in a forest. The founder of Koguryu in the north came also from an egg of superhuman origin. One of the early heroes of Silla came from an egg that floated in from the sea in a chest. The origin of the three heroes of Quelpart is different. They arose from a hole in the ground. The founder of Koryu had for mother the daughter of the sea-king, the Korean Neptune. Another mighty man came from beneath a boulder in the shape of a golden toad.

Closely connected with these are the tales which deal with the omens and signs that heralded the coming of momentous events. It was always the evil fortune that was thus foreshadowed. Fear is a main element in the religion of all semi-civilised people, and this fear has made them quick to detect the signs of coming danger. Before the kingdom of Pakche fell, imps flew through the palace corridors, screaming, "Pakche is fallen," and then dived into the earth. Digging at the point where they disappeared, the King found a tortoise on whose back was written, "Pakche's sun is at the zenith," which meant that it was ready to go down. In other cases, tigers have come down from the mountains and wandered in the streets of the capital; the sea has turned red like blood; meteors, comets and eclipses have appeared; abnormal births, either human or animal, have

taken place; a white fox has crossed the road in front of the King, insects have fallen in showers, thunder has been heard in winter, fruit trees have blossomed late in the fall, a white bow has pierced the sun, red snow has fallen, wailing sounds have proceeded from the royal tombs, a city or temple gate has been blown down, clouds or frogs have fought with each other. All these and many more are met with in Korean legend, and every one of them has meant death or destruction or some other dire calamity. It is interesting to note how closely some of these correspond to the signs which were dreaded by the ancient Romans. Among the signs which predict good fortune, the most prominent are the meeting with a white deer, the finding of a white pheasant or a white crow, or the discovery of a stem of barley with two stalks. But many happy events have been foretold by dreams. The founder of the present dynasty is said to have dreamed that he saw a sheep running over the hills, and as it ran its horns and tail dropped off. This meant that the two upper strokes and the lower stroke of the Chinese character for sheep had been taken away, leaving the character for king! Yi Sun-sin, who saved Korea in 1592, had a dream in which he saw himself defending a tree which vandals were attempting to cut down. A maiden dreamed that she saw a dragon enter her father's ink-water bottle. When she awoke she took the bottle and hid it until in after years her own son was ready to go up to Seoul and take the examinations. She gave it to him, and promised that the dragon would help him take his degree. It did, and he became Prime Minister.

Prophecy plays an important part in Korean legendary lore. Of course, it is almost all *ex post facto* prophecy, but the Koreans still cling to it. Most of the leading events in Korean history since the tenth century are said to have been foretold at some earlier time. There does not seem to have been any prophetic office, but now and again a monk or a scholar has been moved to tell his vision of the future. The monk Muhak objected to the site upon which it was proposed to build the

first palace at Seoul, and affirmed that if it was built there a great calamity would overtake the country in just two hundred years. His words were unheeded, and just two hundred years later the armies of Hideyoshi landed on the coast of southern Korea. To prove that these prophecies were not all made after the event, the Korean points to those prophecies which have existed for centuries and are as yet unfulfilled. The most striking of these is that the present dynasty will be followed by one that will have its capital at Kye-ryong Mountain in the south. Another affirmed that this dynasty would have great difficulty in passing its five-hundredth anniversary. As that year came just after the China-Japan war, many Koreans watched with the utmost solicitude to see whether the dangerous point would be passed in safety. The latest one to come to light is that, "When white pines grow in Korea, the northern half of the peninsula will go to the Tartar and the southern half to the shrimp." The Koreans interpret the "white pines" to be the telegraph poles, and Tartar to be Russia, and the shrimp to be Japan; for the islands of Japan are noted as being in the shape of a shrimp.

When the monk Tosan in 918 ascended Songak and chose the site for the capital of the Koryu dynasty, he made a mistake, for when he went to take another look in the morning he saw far away to the south the peaks of Samgak Mountains peeping above the nearer range, thus forming the dreaded *kyubong,* or "spying peak"; and for this reason he said that within five hundred years the dynasty would fall before another whose capital should be at the foot of Samgak. Four hundred and seventy-six years later his word came true.

Another style of legend deals with the supernatural aid that was given in important crises in history. When Chumong fled from home before his brothers and came to an impassable river, the fish came to the surface and formed a solid bridge upon which he crossed to safety. When the capital of Silla was attacked by wild men, strange warriors appeared with ears like

bamboo leaves and delivered the town. The next day the King found his father's grave strewn with the leaves, and he then knew that his father's spirit had led forth an army of spirits and had delivered him.

The battlefields of Korea, as of every other land, form the background for many a thrilling tale. When the army of Koguryu went forth to conquer Puyu, they heard the sound of clashing arms in Yimul forest. The leaders pushed forward and found swords and spears clashing against each other in mimic battle, but wielded by invisible hands. It was deemed a good omen. The weapons were taken, and with them the foe was conquered. When rebels besieged Kyong-ju, a star fell in the city, a sign of destruction. The rebels rejoiced; but the stubborn general within, defying even the fates, sent up a kite with a lantern attached, and the rebels, thinking that it was the star and that the decree of heaven had been reversed, raised the siege and decamped.

At one time or another almost every foot of Korean soil has been the scene of battle, and the tales of wonderful marksmanship, heroic daring, gigantic strength, subtle stratagem, inventive genius, intrepid horsemanship and hairbreadth escape by field and flood are among the commonest household words in Korea. Who can worthily sing the praises of Yi Yu-song, against whose body bullets flattened themselves and fell harmless to the ground; or of Kwak-Cha-u, the "General of the Red Robe," who to-day would be falling upon the enemy in Chulla and to-morrow would take breakfast in Kyong-ju, a thousand *li* away, because he had the power to "wrinkle the ground"? He would make the ground contract before him, and, after he had stepped over it, expand it again and find that he had gone a hundred *li*. Many are the *dei ex machina* like this, whereby men have been saved from seemingly desperate situations.

Women, too, come in for their full share of attention, from the time of Yuwha, the mermaid princess mother of Chumong, down to the time of Nonga, the dancing-girl patriot, who seized

the Japanese general, her enforced paramour, and leaped to death with him from the wall of Chin-ju, in the days of the great invasion. Most notable was the Queen of the last King of Pakche, who, upon the approach of the ruthless enemy, led her maids to the top of a beetling precipice and threw herself into the water below rather than suffer indignity at the hands of the conquerors. That is the Nakwhaam, or "Precipice of the Falling Flowers," a name of most poetic beauty.

Tongman, the first woman ruler in Silla, divined, from the fire in the frogs' eyes, that the enemy had crossed the border of her realm. Seo, the faithful wife, followed her husband to Japan on the flying boulder and became a queen there. She wove the magic silk on which the King of Silla sacrificed, and thus brought back the light of heaven to his realm, which, since her departure, had been shrouded in Egyptian darkness. There was also the Korean Judith, who, during the occupation of Pyeng-yang by the Japanese in 1592, brought her brother over the wall at night to smite off the head of her captor, who slept bolt upright at a table with a sword in each hand and with only one eye shut at a time. Even after his head had rolled to the floor, he arose in his place and hurled one of his swords with such tremendous force that it went clean through a massive wooden pillar.

There are stories of women notorious for their wickedness, as, for instance, the Princess of Ang-nang, who married a prince of Yemak and one night went and cut open the head of the big drum which, without touch of mortal hand, always emitted a booming sound when an enemy was approaching. Soon after this messengers came hurrying with the news that the Ang-nang forces were crossing the border, but the King laughed at it, saying that the drum had given no warning. Too late it was found that the drum was destroyed.

A fruitful source of Korean legend is the wisdom shown by magistrates and governors in deciding knotty questions of law. These bear witness to the rich fund of humour in the

Korean, which keeps him cheerful and patient through centuries of — what shall we say? — anything but ideal government.

A boy accidentally shot his parent and came weeping to the prefect, who had not the heart to execute the penalty of the law on him. But the prefect's son, coming at the moment and seeing his father's perplexity, asked the cause, and, being told, exclaimed: "The boy must be killed. If his heart had been right, he would not have waited for the law to punish him; he would have killed himself. It is plain that his tears are only to excite pity." So the prefect sent the boy up to Seoul for execution.

A hunter had wounded a fox and was chasing it down when a dog ran out of a house and caught the animal. The owner of the dog claimed the game. The magistrate decided as follows: "It is evident that what the hunter was after was the animal's skin, while the dog thought only of its flesh. Let each have what he was after."

Early one morning at a country inn a good horse was stolen and a poor spavined brute was left in its place. The prefect was appealed to. He ordered that the miserable animal that had been left be deprived of water for two days and then set free upon the road. Of course it went straight for its former master's house in a distant village, and there the stolen horse was found.

When we speak of myth, we take the word in its strict meaning, — some extra-natural origin of a natural phenomenon. At the very start we must say that the Korean imagination has never been capable of those grand flights of fancy which produced the enchanting myths of Greece. Nor has it been virile enough or elemental enough to evolve the stern heroes of the Norse mythology. The Greek, the Roman, the Scandinavian pantheons are filled with figures that loom gigantic and awful, while in Korea these agencies all seem, somehow, less than man; sometimes craftier, often stronger, but seldom worthier or better. So, instead of giving us a Phœbus Apollo to lead out the chariot

of the sun, the Korean gives us the reason why the bedbug is so very flat. Instead of fancying that the cirrus clouds are flocks of sheep feeding in ethereal pastures, the Korean tells us why sparrows hop on both feet while magpies walk by putting one foot before the other. The Greek mythology is telescopic, the Korean microscopic. If you want to know the origin of fire, of the precession of the equinoxes, of echo or of lightning, you must go to the Greek; but if you desire to learn why the ant has such a small waist, or why the louse has a black spot on its breast, or why crabs walk sideways, you must consult Korean lore. A single sample will suffice.

The flies and the sparrows had a quarrel and agreed to arbitrate. The governor of Pyeng-an was chosen to settle the matter. The flies charged the sparrows with stealing the rice from the harvest fields and of building their nests under the eaves of the houses and causing all sorts of disturbances. Without waiting to hear the other side of the case, the governor ordered the sparrows to be beaten on the legs. As the blows began to fall, the sparrows hopped up and down in pain and begged that their side of the story be heard. The governor complied, and then the advocate of the sparrows charged the flies with laying eggs in the standing rice and ruining whole crops, with entering houses and defiling the food and waking the sleepers in the early morning. The governor would hear no more, but ordered the flies to be beaten unmercifully. It was their turn to be humble then. They came before the governor and, rubbing their hands together as Koreans always do when supplicating, asked that they be let off. After thinking it over, the governor pardoned both sides, but, in order that neither the sparrows nor the flies should forget the warning, he decreed that for all time the sparrows should hop instead of walk, and that whenever a fly alighted he should rub his hands together, as they had just done before him!

In like manner Korean lore tells why flounders have both eyes on the same side of the head, why shad have so many

bones, wny the full moon contains a picture of a tree with a rabbit beneath, why sorghum seeds are enveloped in a red case, why clams are simply birds that have fallen into the sea, how the serpent and the octopus had a fight and as a result the serpent had to surrender his four feet to the octopus, how the earthworm had his feet all taken away and given to the centipede, — all these and many another quaint and curious freak of nature is explained to the satisfaction of the Korean.

Thus far we have been able to classify roughly the different types of Korean folk-tales, but outside these limits there is a whole realm of miscellaneous fiction, so varied in its character as to defy classification; and we can enumerate only individual types. I should include under one head all those tales which draw their inspiration from the workings of human passions. Of the love-story, as we know it in the West, Korean lore is entirely innocent. Social conditions, which prevent personal contact between men and women of a marriageable age, sufficiently account for this; and it is this limitation along the line of legitimate affection that is to blame for a wide range of popular literature which cannot be discussed with propriety. Love between man and woman is a thing never spoken of among respectable Koreans.

Many tales are based upon the passion for revenge. Without doubt the prevalence of this type results from a state of society in which even-handed and blindfold justice finds no place; where the principle, "to the victor belongs the spoils," applies equally in the political, industrial and social life. It is a condition in which "pull" in its most sordid sense is the main asset of the politician, the merchant and even the coolie. Here the passion for revenge has daily and hourly food to feed upon, and we see a clear reflection of it in the folk-tales.

A woman has been robbed of her ancestral burial-place by a bad prefect, and she is told by a fortune-teller that she will recover the property as soon as she is able to make one egg stand upon another without falling off. One night, several

years after this, the King of Korea, masquerading like Haroun al Raschid of old, peeped through a window and saw an aged woman trying to make one egg stand upon another, but always without success. But even as he looked, behold! the impossible was done. He demanded admittance and, after he had heard the story, gave the woman ample revenge.

A young girl whose father and brother have been wrongfully done to death by the Prime Minister retires to a mountain retreat, and practises the sword dance with the purpose of becoming so proficient that she will be called upon to dance before the court and thus will secure an opportunity to kill the Prime Minister's son. Meanwhile that son has been disowned by the Prime Minister and wanders away among the mountains, where he accidentally meets the girl and persuades her to marry him, promising to let her go when her destiny calls. The boy has been told by a fortune-teller that he will die on his eighteenth birthday. Neither of them tells the other what is in store, and the girl never dreams that she has married the man that she must kill if she is to keep her oath. It would take too long to unravel the plot, but the reader can see that all sorts of complications are possible.

Korea has also its stories of detectives and their wiles. The custom of sending government detectives to the country to spy upon governors and prefects and to right the wrongs of the people forms an easy hook upon which to hang many an interesting tale. These are crude compared with the complicated plots of the West, and yet now and again situations occur that would do credit to Sherlock Holmes himself. In the human heart there is a passionate love of justice. In the end the right must prevail. Koreans evidently think so, for though there are tragedies enough in actual life there are none in Korean fiction. Things come out right in the end. The Korean may be much of a fatalist, but he is not a pessimist. His fatalism is of that cheerful type that leads him to take things as they come. We may rightly say that the comic muse fills the whole stage of Korean drama. It is the villain only that gets killed off.

This craving for justice amounts to a passion; perhaps on the principle that things that are least accessible are the most desired. This feeling is expressed in a multitude of stories in which justice, long delayed, has at last been done. The Korean story-teller has the same penchant for getting the hero into hot water that the Western novelist has, but the Korean always gets his hero out, which is more than can be said for our more realistic style, in which the hero is often left suspended over the coals.

Stories based upon the passion for fame generally take a literary turn. They cluster about the great national examinations. The enormous influence that these examinations have exercised on the life of the Korean is shadowed forth in countless stories relating to the open strife of the competitors, their attempts to cheat or to bribe the examiners, to substitute spurious manuscripts, to forge names, if by any means whatever they may arrive at the Mecca of official position. And right here appears the relative status of literary and military life. The literary man is distinctly above the military. No fame is sufficient that rests merely upon military success. There are a very few exceptions. All Korean fiction goes to show that military glory is thrust upon a man, while it is only literary fame that he eagerly seeks.

Avarice is also one of the chords that are struck in Korean tales, but it is usually only as a secondary theme. Rarely is a story devoted exclusively or even mainly to the illustration of this passion. The Koreans are too happy-go-lucky, and they have too great a contempt for niggardliness to make the sordid acquisitive faculty a pleasing theme in fiction. On the other hand, the tales of generosity and self-sacrifice, of prodigal and even reprehensible bounty, are common enough, for they fit the spirit of the people and go hand in hand with their optimism.

A lad goes forth to seek his fortune. Coming to a village, he meets another boy who is grieving because he has no money with which to bury a parent. Our hero gives the unknown lad

every cent he has, and then fares on, a beggar. Of how he tramps up and down the country, and finally comes to the capital and becomes a general, of how the enemy have in their ranks a veritable Goliath, of how our hero goes and challenges him only to find that it is the very person whom he had befriended, and how a happy peace is consummated, — all this forms the kind of story that the boys and girls of Korea can listen to by the hour and still wish for more.

The peculiar customs of the country are enshrined in the folk-lore. The unique stone-fight; the tug-of-war; the detestable widow-stealing and the still more horrible custom called *posam*, which is veritable murder, committed for the purpose of forestalling the predictions of the fortune-teller that the bride will soon become a widow; the wiles of the *ajuns*, or hangers-on at country prefectures, who are looked upon much as Judean publicans were, — all these themes and many more, based upon national customs and traits, swell the volume of Korean folk-lore.

It is natural that a land as old as this should be filled with relics of other days, and that they should be surrounded with a halo of popular veneration. Even though many of these relics are now lost, like the Holy Grail, yet the stories remain. There was the golden yardstick of Silla, and the pair of jade flutes that refused to sound if taken away from the town of Kyong-ju. There was the magic stone in which one could look and discover the nature of any disease. There was the magic robe which would render its wearer invisible, and the King's stone, from which the ashes of cremated sovereigns of Silla were cast into the Japan Sea. Stories cluster about the dolmens and cromlechs that are found all over Korea, but whose origin no one seems to know.

Among the miscellaneous tales are those which tell of the introductions of various things into Korea, or their invention. St. Patrick drove the snakes out of Ireland, but Prince Yunsan introduced them into Korea. He wanted a few to keep under his bed, but as there were none in Korea he sent to India and secured

a cargo of them. As they were being unloaded, some escaped into woods, and ever since that time Korea has had her ophidians like other lands.

The scientific value of a study of folk-lore is the opportunity it affords for comparison. We want to know what are the affinities of Korean folk-lore in order to establish its ethnological relationships. Such comparison seems to be possible when we note that in Korea we have stories that are almost the exact counterpart of that of Cinderella, The Forty Thieves, Brer Rabbit, Haroun al Raschid, Jonah and the Whale, Red Riding Hood, Aladdin's Lamp, Sinbad the Sailor and many another type familiar to the scientific folk-lorist of the West.

PROVERBS

In spite of the lack of a literature that is largely accessible to the common classes, the people have developed a keenness of insight and a terseness of expression that is surprising. The lack of books has resulted in a refinement of the art of story-telling, and this in turn has brought out a large volume of terse and witty sayings which correspond to our saws and proverbs. The Koreans use these much more frequently than we do, and it adds a spice to their talk that is often lacking in ours.

Where we would use the very humdrum formula "Make assurance doubly sure," they would say, "Even though the crab is boiled, you must pull its legs off first and eat them." There is a whole sermon in the proverb, "A finger prick will demand attention, though the worms be eating the heart unknown." The value of personal observation is illustrated by the saying, "If you want to know how deep the river is, wade in and see." "The blind man stole his own hen and ate it" is a finely ironical way of saying that the covetous man will overreach himself. Our proverb, "Lock the barn-door after the horse has been stolen," is expressed equally well in the Korean, "Fill out the prescription after the friends of the sick man have put on mourning."

"There cannot be a deep valley without there being a high mountain" means that you cannot get something for nothing. The Koreans better our "Every man's goose is a gander" by saying, "Even the hedgehog says her young are smooth." "Making a mountain of a mole-hill" means to the Korean, "Killing a bullock for a feast when a hen would have sufficed." A frequently observed trait in human nature is touched upon in the saying, "The man who had his face slapped in Tongjagi waits till he gets to Subingo before he makes faces at his insulter"; in other words, he puts some space between before answering. We say that a man must lie upon a bed as he makes it, and in the same way the Korean says that "The man who eats the salt must drink the water." To "build a house beside the main road" is a rather subtle way of saying that "too many cooks spoil the broth," for it means that everyone who passes along will criticise and say, "Why don't you make this part so and that part thus?" and in this way the builder will at last find that he has made a botch of the whole job. We have an expressive proverb, "Jump from the frying-pan into the fire," but the Korean is abreast of us with his "Cut off a wart and make a tumor." "What looked like blossoms on the dead tree turned out to be only the white mould of decay" conveys the same idea as our reference to a mirage. "You cannot sit in the valley and see the new moon set" means that if we would get the best things we must make an effort. Insincerity is epitomised in the trenchant words, "Honey on the lips, but a sword in the heart." It shows a keen insight into human nature to evolve the proverb, "Never beg from a man who has once been a beggar himself." How often do fashion's votaries in every land illustrate the saying, "He went and caught the dropsy out of envy for the fat man"! The Koreans have gotten rather the better of our proverb, "The pot called the kettle black" by saying, "The aspen blamed the pine for rustling so loudly in the wind," when everyone knows that the least breath of air will set the aspen leaves to quivering. This proverb contains a distinctly poetic touch which is quite lack-

ing in our culinary metaphor. How true it is the world over that "Where there are no tigers, wild-cats will be very self-important." This illustrates the man who is clothed with a little brief authority, or, in part, the fact that "When the cat 's away, the mice will play." The idea that we try to convey in the classical allusion to "the Greek calends" the Korean expresses in the more homely way, "Like blood in a bird's foot." The universal desire to escape responsibility is shadowed forth in the proverb, "The cook blames the table because he cannot pile the food high." The skill of a Korean cook is proven by his ability to make a pyramid of cakes or sweetmeats two or three times as high as the diameter of the plate. If he fails, he will say that the plate is crooked. "Even beggars sometimes feast their friends" corresponds to our "Every dog has his day." Excessive caution is illustrated by the hyperbole, "He would not walk beneath the city wall with a load of rotten eggs." The extremely small value of the load and the extremely small liability of the wall falling and crushing them show the measure of the man's timidity. We sometimes enumerate our barnyard fowl before their incubation, and in the same way the Korean says that some people "Make the baby-clothes before the wedding." It is a profound truth that has many close applications that "The horse will be tripped up if you tether it with too long a rope." Many a rich man's son has proved this to be true, not in Korea only. We say truly that "A scalded cat fears the fire," and the Korean is just as near the truth when he affirms that "A man that has once been frightened by a tortoise will jump every time he sees a kettle cover." One of the most expressive of Korean proverbs characterises the fickle man as "The character *wul* written on chamois skin." Now this character *wul* is 目; but if you write it on chamois skin and then stretch the skin vertically, it will become 日, which is the character *il*, an entirely different thing. It reminds us of Polonius and the cloud which looked now like a camel, now like a weasel and anon like a whale.

These are only a very few of the commoner proverbs that

are used as household words. The following might be added to show how the Koreans have picked out for such generalisation those qualities of the heart which are the universal property of the race.

"He ate so fast that he choked."

"The flower that blooms in the morning is withered by noon."

"You can recover an arrow shot, but not a word spoken."

"It is easy to hurt yourself with a sharp-cornered stone."

"To make a mountain you must carry every load of earth."

"If you go across-lots, you will fall in with thieves."

"If the carpenter stretches his marking-cord tight, he will be able to make a straight line."

"If you use good enough bait, the fish will bite, though it kill."

"It is foolish to mourn over a broken vase."

"You can mend now with a trowel what it will take a spade to mend to-morrow."

"You cannot expect to lift a heavy stone without getting red in the face."

"He pours instruction into a cow's ear."

"All roads lead to Seoul."

CHAPTER XXX

RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION

BEFORE beginning the discussion of Korea's religions we must define the term. This will seem strange to a Western reader, who knows well enough what a religion is; but with these Eastern people it is extremely difficult to tell where religion leaves off and mere superstition begins. I think it will be better to take the word in its broadest sense, and consider religion to include every relation which men hold, or fancy that they hold, to superhuman, infra-human or, more broadly still, extra-human phenomena. And we must even supplement this by saying that in the category of extra-human we include the spirits of human beings that have died. Thus defined, we shall see that the religions of Korea form a very intricate study. In no department of Korean life is the antiquity of their civilisation so clearly demonstrated as in the mosaic of religious beliefs that are held, not only by different individuals but by any single individual. We have no choice but to deal with these separately, but the reader must ever bear in mind that in every Korean mind there is a jumble of the whole; that there is no antagonism between the different cults, however they may logically refute each other, but that they have all been shaken down together through the centuries until they form a sort of religious composite, from which each man selects his favourite ingredients without ever ignoring the rest. Nor need any man hold exclusively to any one phase of this composite religion. In one frame of mind he may lean toward the Buddhistic element and at another time he may revert to his ancestral fetichism. As a general thing, we may say that the all-round Korean will be a Confucianist when in

society, a Buddhist when he philosophises and a spirit-worshipper when he is in trouble. Now, if you want to know what a man's religion is, you must watch him when he is in trouble. Then his genuine religion will come out, if he has any. It is for this reason that I conclude that the underlying religion of the Korean, the foundation upon which all else is mere superstructure, is his original spirit-worship. In this term are included animism, shamanism, fetichism and nature-worship generally.

Buddhism was introduced into Korea in the early centuries of our era, and Confucianism followed soon after. The former was too mystical to appeal to the people in its more philosophic aspects, and, as it came in as a fashionable state religion, its spectacular character was its chief recommendation. Confucianism, on the other hand, was too cold and materialistic to appeal to the emotional side of his nature, and so became simply a political system, the moral elements of which never found any considerable following among the masses. But both these systems eventually blended with the original spirit-worship in such a way as to form a composite religion. Strange to say, the purest religious notion which the Korean to-day possesses is the belief in Hananim, a being entirely unconnected with either of the imported cults and as far removed from the crude nature-worship. This word *Hananim* is compounded of the words "heaven" (sky) and "master," and is the pure Korean counterpart of the Chinese word "Lord of Heaven." The Koreans all consider this being to be the Supreme Ruler of the universe. He is entirely separated from and outside the circle of the various spirits and demons that infest all nature. Considered from this standpoint, the Koreans are strictly monotheists, and the attributes and powers ascribed to this being are in such consonance with those of Jehovah that the foreign missionaries (Protestant) have almost universally accepted the term for use in teaching Christianity. The Roman Catholics have adopted the term *Chun-ju*, a pure Chinese word of the same significance, but open to the same objection, namely, that it was used long before

Christianity came, and may therefore be called the name of a heathen god. But while in China it has been found that idols exist bearing the name Chun-ju, the Koreans have never attempted to make any physical representation of Hananim. He has never been worshipped by the use of any idolatrous rites, and the concept of him in the Korean mind is, so far as it goes, in no way derogatory to the revealed character of God himself. It is a moot point whether the Koreans consider the physical heavens to be the person of this god. Some of the more ignorant ones will deny that he is invisible, and point to the heavens in proof of their statement; but they attribute to him a fatherly care of mankind in sending sunlight and shower, and a retributive power in striking the wicked with lightning or other disaster. The Temple of Heaven to which the Emperor repairs to pray in times of famine, pestilence or other great calamity is a purely Chinese innovation, and can be said to have only such connection with the Korean Hananim as grows out of a common but independent concept of Divinity in the two countries. As a rule, the people do not worship Hananim. He is appealed to by the Emperor only, as we have just said, and this in itself would seem to indicate that the Koreans received the idea of this being from China. One would be rash to dogmatise here, but it is our conviction that it was indigenous to Korea as well as to China.

The foregoing coincides with the Confucian element in Korean religion, so far as Confucianism postulates a personal Supreme Being, but on the Buddhist side there are countless gods, the one commonest to the Korean being Ok-wang Sang-je, or Jade King Supreme Ruler. The various "uses" of the Buddhist deities will appear in connection with our remarks on fortune-telling.

We must turn now to what we may call the practical religion of the Koreans, the belief in a countless number of spirits which definitely affect the every-day life of the individual. The higher deities are reserved for special festivals, but these others

are daily in evidence and the ordinary Korean has them ever in mind. Here it is easy to exaggerate, for there are thousands of Koreans who pay no attention whatever to any kind of a deity or power. They are morally averse to any restriction upon their own passions, and they are too intelligent to believe that their welfare is dependent upon the propitiation of any spirits, whether such exist or not. They may acknowledge the fact, but will not abide by the logical inference. There are very many Koreans, however, who not only believe in the existence of such spirits, but are anxious to propitiate them. It is safe to say that an overwhelming majority of these are women, whose comparative lack of education makes them highly susceptible to superstition. There are also many men who in ordinary life would laugh the imps to scorn, and yet when laid upon a bed of sickness or subjected to some other painful casualty are willing enough to compound for their previous scepticism by the payment of large bribes to these same imps. It comes out, as we have said, in times of trouble. Korean folk-tales frequently have to deal with a situation where a gentleman is ill, but will have nothing to do with the spirits. His wife, however, holds the opposite opinion, and, unknown to her lord, smuggles in a *mundang,* or *pansu,* to exorcise the demon of disease.

We have already pointed out the fact that, as a rule, women are the best supporters of Buddhism, owing to the very inferior position which Confucianism accords them. The latter cult is the avowed enemy of the belief in goblins and imps, but Buddhism has become so mixed up with them that the Korean woman cannot hold to the one without embracing the other. Most Korean gentlemen will scoff at the idea that the spirits have any control over human destiny, but they put nothing in the way of their wives' adhesion to the lower cult.

There are two orders of spirits, — those which have an unknown but extra-human origin and those which represent the souls of the deceased. The various elves that haunt the spring, the rock, the tree, the cave or the river are nature-gods, pure

and simple, and have little to do with human destiny, except as they are sacrificed to and asked to give good luck. They represent the good fairies and are not propitiated, but simply asked to give blessing or help. The spirits of disease and disaster are commonly considered nature-gods as well, and not of human origin. They require to be propitiated or else exorcised, which ceremony it is the office of the *mudang* or *pansu* to perform. These spirits all go under the name *kwisin* or *kweesin*. But there is another class, called *tokgabi*, which correspond to the malignant imps of our own folk-lore. They are always up to pranks, and in mischief they find their greatest delight. They fly about the kitchen and knock over the kettles and pans; they seize the goodman by the top-knot and cut it off and fly away; they make the kettle cover fall into the kettle. All these and a long list of other tricks they play about the house. They like company, and will not go away and live in a desert place by themselves. If a miser has buried some money, they may watch the place and haunt it, so that no one else will dare to live there, though the imps themselves can get no good from the money. But the most malignant spirits of all are the disembodied souls of those men who have met a violent death or who have been grievously wronged and have died without obtaining revenge. Ordinarily these are supposed to have been good people while they were living, and their present deplorable state is not a punishment for past misdeeds, but they are in somewhat the same condition that the ancient Greek thought the soul of the unburied was in. There is something that must be done before the spirit can get rest; it must be "laid." The spirit seems to think that it must vex and trouble people until they effect this. There are thousands of spirits who are just waiting for someone to do them an injury, so that they may have an opportunity to play their pranks upon him. The person who succeeds in steering clear of all these traps and pitfalls cannot become the object of their persecution.

It is important to note that while these shadowy beings have

some powers that are distinctly superhuman, in other points they are less than human. Almost invariably, in the Korean story, the fiend is thwarted by the word of a just man. Him they not only fear, but must obey. But we must pause and give a few special names and characteristics of the Korean gods, beginning with those of the highest grade.

Besides Hananim, who is quite separate and remote from all others, even as Allah was distinct from the gnomes and naiads of the Arabian Nights, the Koreans believe in the Five Point Generals. These are supposed to rule the five divisions of the visible firmament, — North, East, South, West and Centre. It is to these that the *pansus,* or blind exorcists, pray and offer sacrifice in order to gain the upper hand of evil spirits. Each of these five great gods has a host of lieutenants, nearly one hundred thousand in all, and it is to these that the *pansu* looks for active help. These five generals are frequently taken as village gods, and the curiously carved posts which are so often found at the entrance of a Korean country town, and which have erroneously been called guide-posts, are representations of these gods, which stand as guardians against the entrance of wicked spirits.

Then come the earth spirits, the ones which make the Koreans so reluctant to dig in the earth for minerals. They think the spirits will consider themselves robbed and so exact a penalty. It may be that it is for this reason that miners are looked down upon as practical outcasts by the people. These spirits must be consulted every time a grave is to be dug, for if a mistake should be made the dead man's descendants might wake up some morning to find that the grave is empty and the body has been spirited away, to their everlasting disgrace. Houses must be built only on spots where the spirits allow, and more than one house has had to be pulled down and erected on some other site because of the terrible misfortunes the imps have inflicted and are ready to inflict because their toes have been trodden upon.

Often the traveller will come across a heap of small stones

beside the road and a stunted tree on which are hung rags, locks of hair, strips of coloured cloth, pieces of money and a great variety of useless articles. Such a place may be found in the plains, but it is much more likely to be near the top of a pass between two valleys. These sacred places are not dedicated to any particular spirit, but to any or all the local deities. The traveller picks up a stone and throws it on the pile. This is his prayer for success in his journey. If he has reason to fear that the "good-fortune snake" is not propitious, he will spit on the stone pile. A man who is going to the neighbouring market with his bundle of wares to sell may stop and tie a one-cash piece to the branch of the tree "just for luck." It is an offering to the spirit, and is a request for financial success. A woman from the village below may come up the hill with a bowl of rice and a little honey and set the food down on a stone and shuffle her hands together, bending low the while. She is asking that her son come home betimes from his fishing trip, or that her child may recover speedily from the disease which has seized upon it. A bride may cut off a shred of her skirt and tie it to the tree to prevent the good spirits of her father's house following her to her new abode and deserting the dwelling of her parent.

As the name of these spirits is legion, so the names of the different shrines where they are worshipped would make a long catalogue. There is the "Boulder Hall," erected to the spirit of some particular rock; the "Buddha's Hall," a sort of cross between Buddhism and fetichism; "Ursa Major Hall," to the spirit of that constellation; the "Kyung Hall," referring to the Buddhist sutras; the "Wall and Moat Hall," a common name for the place where there is a pile of stones or a tree to tie fetiches to; the "Old Man Hall," in honour of the Old Man Star, which Koreans believe can be seen in the south only by the people who live on the island of Quelpart; the "Grandmother Hall," "Kingdom Teacher Hall," "Dragon Spirit Hall" and many others.

There are also what the Koreans call the mountain spirits. They are most like our angels of any of the Korean supernatural beings, but they are almost always represented as venerable men with long white beards. They live among the inaccessible peaks of the mountains and always in a state of bliss. Happy is the man who chances to catch sight of one of them. If a man lives an exemplary life, he may become a *sin-sun* and join this happy band among the hills, and many are the tales Koreans tell of the wonderful adventures of good boys among the haunts of these immortals. One of these is so like the story of Rip Van Winkle that we must give it space.

Paksuni was a wood-gatherer by profession, and his wife was a termagant. So long as he earned a day's wages he did not worry, but the woman was always scolding because he did not earn more, and raising a great disturbance whenever he happened to miss a day. One morning he took his *jiggy* on his back and started up the mountain-side to gather fagots as usual. It was very warm, and he sat down in the shade of a tree to cool off. What more natural than that he should doze off, and presently see through sleepy lids two venerable men approach, one carrying a chess-board and the other the bag of chess-pieces? They sat down beneath the shade and began the game, never deigning a glance in his direction. He watched the game as it proceeded with absorbing interest. It was the very best game of chess he had ever seen played. Finally one of the old men made a move and exclaimed, "Chang" (check). It was the first word that had been spoken, and it brought him to his feet. The old gentlemen disappeared like a flash, and left him looking about in vain for his axe and *jiggy*. The latter was gone, and nothing of the former remained but a rusty shred of iron. His clothes were in rags, and his beard had grown to his waist. He tottered down the mountain-side and entered the village. It all seemed changed. The faces looked unfamiliar. He stopped a man and asked if he could tell where a fellow named Paksuni lived. The man stared and answered that Paksuni had been

lost for thirty years. He had wandered among the hills and had been eaten up by tigers. Just then an old woman came along to get some water from the well and stopped to listen. The bewildered fellow announced that he himself was Paksuni; whereupon the old woman dropped her water-jar, seized the tattered remnant of humanity by the top-knot and haled him down the street, calling upon heaven to witness that the lazy rascal had left her for thirty years to shift for herself, and now had the face to come back and show himself. This was so much like old times that Paksuni was happy, knowing that after all he had not gone mad. Those who think that chess is a slow game will find confirmation of their opinion in this tale.

Besides all these there are the village gods, who watch over special localities and to whom the people erect shrines and offer an annual sacrifice. In this every member of the village is interested, and the cost of the ceremony is borne by all.

One is fairly safe in conjecturing that the worship of the dragon is a Chinese innovation. The Koreans are imaginative enough to evolve the idea of a long chain of mountains being the body of an immense dragon, but this idea existed in China long before the Koreans could have evolved it. In fact, among these spirit gods there are some that are identical with those which the Chinese recognise and there are others which are purely native to Korea. There has been such a mixture of all sorts and conditions of ideas in the peninsula that one must speak with many reservations and without the least dogmatism. We know where Confucianism and Buddhism came from, but as for the rest the only thing that we *know* is that it is here. This dragon plays an important part in the Korean's life, and his influence is always and only good. We could not begin to describe the countless points where this fabled beast comes in contact with the fortunes of the Korean.

The question of fetiches is closely connected with the foregoing. The belief in these many spirits leads people to attempt to localise them by means of some physical emblem. They do

not think that the fetich is the spirit itself, but that it fastens upon the fetich and can always be found there when necessity demands. Dr. George Heber Jones is an authority on Korean fetiches, and he has given the following as some of the most important. "When a Korean moves, he does not take his 'gods' with him, but passes to the dominion of the gods of the house to which he goes." For this reason he is very careful to get an exact list of the latter, so that if sickness or misfortune comes he may know just whom he must pray to in order to get out of trouble. Each house has its Holy Master. "His fetich consists of blank sheets of paper and a small bag of rice, which are hung upon the ridge-beam of the principal room." When a new house is erected, an elaborate ceremony often takes place, especially if the owner be a little superstitious. A *mudang* is called in, and by her occult arts she invites a Holy Master to come and abide under that roof and take charge of the entire destiny of the inmates, ward off disease and protect them generally. From that time on no one must ever step upon the threshold of that house, but always over it, for this is the neck of the household god, and to step upon it would anger him and make him bring misfortune at once. "Ranking next to the Holy Master is the Lord of the Site. His fetich consists of a bundle of straw set up like a booth, on three sticks." He has control, not of the house, but of the site on which it is built, and he must be kept in good temper, or trouble will be brewing.

The Koreans are wonderful people for depending upon luck. They have consequently apotheosised the idea, and every house must have its fetich to Good Luck, and it must be worshipped with great punctuality twice a year. Dr. Jones says very appositely: "The kindly favour of the Deity, bestowed out of pure love and kindness upon his children, is not known in Korea. Her religion remains down on the lower level of luck and ill-luck. When all things are going well, then the spirits are bestowing luck on the family; when things go badly, luck has been withdrawn." In this connection the Koreans have various sorts

of luck-bringers, just as our American negroes carry rabbits' feet. In Korea there are the Luck-snake, the Luck-pig, the Luck-toad, the Luck-weasel and the Luck-man. There are places in the country where people worship the Luck-snake, and the presence of a large snake near a house is welcomed as a good sign.

Each year, about New-Year's time, the Koreans make little straw manikins, stuff a few cash into their bodies and then throw them into the streets, where small boys seize upon them and tear them to pieces for the sake of the money. In this way the spirit of ill-luck is supposed to be dismembered and rendered innocuous. Some people hang a hat and a coat at the entrance of the house as a fetich of the Door-spirit. Others hang up old shoes, bunches of grass and fishes' heads as fetiches of their various household divinities.

Among all the spirits of disease, that which represents the smallpox is the most dangerous, and elaborate ceremonies are gone through to keep him out or, if he has already entered, to get him out again.

Such is a list of some of the many spirits which swarm about the Korean, keep him under constant espionage, and are ready at any moment to fall upon him in wrath. If he goes among the mountains, they are there; if he goes into his inner room, they are there; if he travels to the remotest corner of the earth, they will follow him. It remains, therefore, to examine the ways in which he can keep on good terms with these figments of his imagination, which are still very real to him.

Korean society is blessed, or cursed, with two handicrafts whose aim and end it is to deal with these occult powers with which the Oriental imagination peoples all space. The people who follow these vocations are called *mudang* and *pansu,* the nearest approach to which in English is "sorceress" and "exorcist," but they might be broadly termed witches and wizards. The word *mudang* means "deceiving crowd," and *pansu* means "decider of destiny." The former name is specially appropriate. The *mudang* is always a woman, and is considered at

the very lowest point in the social system. She is always an abandoned character, though generally married. She pretends to be a sort of spiritual medium, and by her friendship with the spirits to be able to influence them as she may wish. Kija is said to have brought with him from China the art of necromancy. It is sure that a character closely allied to that of the *mudang* has existed in China for thousands of years, and if Kija was an actual character, it is more than likely that he brought this form of incantation. We cannot conclude that he brought the spirit worship, but only the peculiar method by which the spirits might be governed. The ceremony performed by the *mudang*, and without which her services are of no avail, is called a *kut*. There are ten different forms of service that she may perform by means of this *kut*.

The service most in demand is that of driving out the spirit of disease. But why should spirits torment people in this way? Well, there are the "hungry" spirits. They come around the door when you are eating, and if you do not throw them a morsel of food they have a grievance against you, and so have power to lay you on a bed of sickness. Of two intimate friends one dies, and his spirit tries to keep up the intimacy after death. This too will make trouble. If a man has wronged the spirits by denying their existence, it is sure to be visited on his head. The spirit that haunts rubbish of various kinds that had lain a long time in one place will follow and injure the man that disturbs them. If you go to the house of a person that has just died, his released spirit is very likely to follow you home and make trouble for you. Such are only a few of the countless ways in which a man may gain the ill-will of the spirits, and from them we can readily see that it will be often through no actual fault of the man but only by pure chance.

Let us then suppose that a man by some such mischance has contracted a disease. He may not be sure that it is caused by a spirit, but if he has reason to suspect that such is the case he will send to the home of a *mudang*, describing his symptoms and

asking her what spirit it is that is causing it. She may reply by naming some spirit, or she may declare that she must see the patient first. After accepting a fee of two or three dollars, she will name a fortunate day on which to hold the *kut,* which will be either at her own house or at that of the patient, according as he has means to pay. The elaborateness of her preparations will also depend upon the fee. If the trouble is caused by the spirit of a dead relative, great care must be taken; but if by a common spirit, then a little ordinary food thrown into the street will generally suffice to cause its departure. The test is by throwing a common kitchen knife out into the road after the food. If it falls with the blade pointing away from the door the spirit has gone; but if the blade points back toward the door, then the spirit will require further argument before leaving. When the patient is a man of large means the ceremony may be performed at some neighbouring shrine.

Arriving at the patient's house, the *mudang* takes charge of the whole place, arranges the food and stations the friends of the sick man at particular points. She is accompanied by an assistant, and when all is ready the latter sits down and begins scraping on a kind of basket. This is supposed to attract the spirit. The *mudang* begins to dance about and to call upon the spirit to come. She works herself up to a perfect frenzy, and at this point the audience believes the spirit has taken possession of her body. Every word now is that of the spirit, not of the woman. She screams out the name of the spirit that has come, and tells what they must do to cure the patient, which directions generally include the payment of an extra sum of money. At last the spirit promises to take away the disease, and then the *mudang,* after a few more frantic leaps and screams which betoken the leaving of the spirit, suddenly becomes quiet and shows no signs of her previous excitement. She does not try to make the deception more complete by pretended exhaustion nor by falling down like a dead person. The grossness of her employer's superstition renders such finesse quite unnecessary. It is perhaps needless to add

that the food that has been provided for the spirit is eaten with great gusto by the *mudang* and the friends of the sick man. The result of all this commotion and fuss upon the patient is seldom very edifying.

A second kind of *kut* is performed after death. A person's spirit will stay about the house for three days after his demise, and often much longer than this. If the relatives have reason to think that the dead man had something that he wished to communicate but did not have the opportunity, they will call a *mudang,* for only through her can they establish intelligent communication with the spirit. The *mudang* comes, arranges the food, and becomes possessed by the spirit, but without any dancing and screaming. She is used by the spirit to make the desired communication, after which the friends weep and say good-bye, and the spirit leaves. Then they all fall to and clear the tables.

Sometimes another *kut* is celebrated after the man is buried. If the dead man was supposed to have been summoned away from life by an angel or messenger sent from one of the great gods, the *mudang* will be called in to raise this spirit messenger and ask it to lead the dead man directly to the realm of the blessed and not through any purgatorial stage. At this time they have the power to call the dead man's spirit back for a positively last appearance, and the final adieus are said.

But even this does not finish the matter. A month after burial the friends of the deceased, if they have money, may hold a monster *kut* at some well-known shrine in the vicinity. The *mudang* is dressed in all her finery, and everything is done to make the ceremony impressive. The object is to help the dead man to secure influence or to get a "pull" with the Judge of Hades. The dead man has no money to do it with, so his friends do it for him.

The food is spread, and the *mudang,* all in white, goes into a trance after the usual gyrations, and the spirit of the departed takes possession. He is asked whether he has met the grand-

parents or other relatives who have been long dead, and all sorts of questions are propounded. These the *mudang* answers glibly, fearing no contradiction. Not infrequently the spirit will promise to do something that will help those who are still in the land of the living, so it appears that the benefits are mutual. This spirit is then dismissed, and the Judge of Hades is called up. There are ten judges on the bench of this supreme court, but this is the Supreme Judge. Food is placed before him, and he is implored to make it easy for their friend in the beyond. He invariably promises to do so and praises the food. After this the *mudang* calls up the special judge who has charge of their friend's case, and he too is properly "fixed." The petitioners have no difficulty in securing his promise to make the man's post-mortem condition as bearable as possible. Then they call up the spirit who guards the household of the man who has died. He is easily entreated, and promises to look after the interests of the family. He may warn the household of some impending trouble, and give them advice as to the best way to avoid it. When these special spirits have all been consulted, any relative who has helped pay for the ceremony may call up any of his friends or relatives and have a chat with them. It is like an afternoon tea with the dead, except that it is generally prolonged far into the night.

One of the chief duties of the *mudang* is to deal with the Great Spirit of Smallpox. This is the only disease that enjoys the special oversight of a spirit all by itself, and it shows that the Koreans put this ailment in the fore-front of the ills that flesh is heir to. It is more to be feared even than cholera, for, like the poor, it is ever with us. From the fifth day after the appearance of the disease no member of the household may comb his hair, wear new clothes, sweep the house, bring any new goods within the doors, cut wood, drive nails, roast beans or allow a drain to become blocked up. Any of these things would leave the patient blind or severely marked. If anyone does sewing in the house, it will cause intolerable itching in the patient.

Neither the ancestors nor the guardian spirit of the house must be sacrificed to, for it would displease the smallpox spirit. The inmates of the house must eat clear rice without beans in it, for this would leave the patient with a black face. No animal must be killed, for this would cause the sick man to scratch his face and aggravate the disease. No washing nor papering must be done, for this would cause the nose of the patient to be permanently stopped up.

After the ninth day all these restrictions are removed excepting the driving of nails, papering of walls and killing of animals. The thirteenth day is the one on which the spirit is supposed to depart. A feast is set for him; a piece of *sari* wood is made to personate a horse, and a straw bag is put on its back with rice and money inside. A red umbrella and a multi-coloured flag are attached, and the whole is set on the roof of the house. This horse is provided for the departing spirit to ride, and must be forthcoming whether the case has ended fatally or not. On that day the *mudang* comes and goes through an elaborate ceremony, in which she petitions the spirit to deal kindly with the patient and not to leave him pock-marked.

The "dragon spirit séance" demands a brief mention. Every river or stream, as well as the ocean, is the abode of a dragon spirit, and every village on the banks of a stream has its periodical sacrifice to this benignant power. Not only so, but the freight-boats have their ceremony, and the ferry-boats, fishing-boats and war-boats and boats that carried the annual envoys to China, — all have their special forms of worship toward the great dragon. The great importance of this sacrifice lies in the fact that the dragon has control of the rainfall, and he must be propitiated in order that agricultural pursuits may not be endangered. The ceremony is usually performed by a *mudang* in a boat, accompanied by as many of the leading people of the village as can crowd in. Her fee is about forty dollars. The most interesting part of the ceremony is the *mudang's* dance, which is performed on the edge of a knife blade laid across the

mouth of a jar that is filled to the brim with water. We cannot affirm anything as to the sharpness of the knife, but we presume that the fee is well earned even if the dragon part of it is purely imaginary.

In the case of coastwise vessels, the *mudang* calls up the dragon spirit and the spirits of the men who have drowned, and implores them to make the sea calm and the voyage successful. For fishing craft a single ceremony suffices for the whole fleet. The *mudang* confesses to the dragon that it is rank trespass for men to go and catch his subjects to eat, but men must live; she begs him to overlook the wrong and give the fishermen a good catch. The ferry is an important institution in Korea, owing to the lack of bridges. The boats are often so crowded that they sink, and the annual loss of life from this cause is considerable. At important ferries the ceremony is a very animated one. A boat is dressed in gala attire, with a spar like a roof-tree extending its whole length. The *mudang* and her accompanying crowd enter and push off from the shore. Food is thrown into the water for the spirit, and as the *mudang* begins to grow excited and "possessed" she imitates the motions of a person dying by drowning. She then leaps to the roof-tree and dances thereon, screaming at the top of her lungs. After an hour of such antics they come ashore, and the *mudang* runs to a willow tree and climbs to its very top, wailing and "taking on" shockingly. She says she is a spirit imprisoned in the dark water, and she must have one chance to take a good look around. From the top of the tree she has a "look see" and then comes down. All the time she has been gnashing her teeth, and howling as loudly as her lungs will permit.

Until the year 1894 the government sent an annual embassy to Peking, and before it started the attendants and underlings held a great *kut*. It would have been beneath the dignity of the envoy to have anything to do with such a superstition, but there is every reason to believe that a good part of the cost was defrayed by him. Four or five *mudangs* were employed, and they

besought the dragon spirit to treat the company well and bring them back in safety. The ceremony was in the shape of a pantomime, in which one of the *mudangs* personated the envoy and another the Minister of State.

Such are only a few of the occasions upon which a *mudang's* services are required. Korean folk-lore teems with stories in which the *mudang* plays a leading part. We have space for only one. A *mudang* dreamed that the Great Spirit of Smallpox appeared to her and said that he was about to enter a certain house in the neighbourhood, and that he had selected a certain closet in the house as his favourite place. When the woman awoke, she hastened to the house indicated, and found that it was true. The young son was stricken with the disease, and continually asked to be placed in that closet. By this the *mudang* knew that her dream was a true one. As the disease developed, the child kept scratching his neck, which caused a dangerous swelling. The *mudang* said, "Someone in this house has witnessed the killing of a hen." Upon inquiry this was found to be true. Still the father refused to allow the *mudang* to hold a *kut* over the child. At last the boy began to turn a livid green in the face, the sure sign of approaching death. The *mudang* said, "Search and you will find that someone has brought a piece of green cloth into the house." This too was found to be true. The father could no longer refuse to let the *mudang* try her hand, and in the story of course the child recovered.

It is said that not until some time after the beginning of the present dynasty was the horrible custom of throwing a young virgin into the sea at Po-ryung discontinued. At that place the *mudang* held an annual séance in order to propitiate the sea dragon and secure plenteous rains for the rice-crop and successful voyages for the mariners. A new prefect was appointed to that district, and as he had no faith in *mudangs* he determined to go and witness the ceremony and put a stop to the custom, if possible. Three *mudangs* were on hand and had secured the maiden for sacrifice. As they led her down to the water's edge to cast

her in, she wept and screamed and struggled. The prefect stopped them.

"Is it necessary for you to sacrifice a human being?"

"Yes, it will please the dragon and he will give good crops."

"How do you know?"

"Oh, we are great friends with him and know his mind."

"Then I think it would please him much more if one of you were sacrificed"; and with that he signalled to one of his attendants, and had one of the *mudangs* bound and thrown into the water. The dragon showed no signs of revealing himself, so the second *mudang* followed the first. Still the spirit gave no sign, and the third *mudang* went to prove the theory. That was the end of the matter. The prefect memorialised the throne against the whole tribe of *mudangs,* and from that time to this they have been considered the lowest of the low.

The *mudangs* are not the only people who have influence with the spirits. The *pansu* is even more conversant with their tricks and better able to overcome their evil propensities. We have noted that the *mudang* is a sort of medium, and moves the spirits through her friendship with them, but the *pansu* is an exorcist rather than a medium. He is the enemy of the spirits, and is able to drive them rather than coax them. The profession of the *mudang* is much older than that of *pansu,* the latter being the product of the past few centuries, while the former have existed from the remotest antiquity.

As we have said, the word *pansu* means "decider of destiny," and we judge truly from this name that the chief office of this blind fakir is to tell fortunes. He is frequently called upon, however, to exorcise evil spirits. He is looked upon as little superior to the *mudang,* though his sex protects him from many aspersions that are cast upon the character of the *mudang.* There are a few female *pansus,* but they have nothing to do with the spirits, and they are as low in the scale as the *mudang.* The office of *pansu* in Korea, like that of masseur in Japan, is confined to the ranks of the blind, and the prevalence of scrofulous diseases

insures a plentiful source from which to recruit the ranks of the profession.

Koreans use the services of a *pansu* to find out whether a man will escape the punishment of a crime; whether he will receive a reward for good conduct; whether a certain piece of work will be successful; what will happen during the day; what will happen during the month; what will happen during the year; what will happen up to the point of death; what was the condition in a former state of existence; whether he carries in his body the seeds of a great misfortune; how to find a lost article or person; whether a journey will be prosperous; what is the condition of a distant friend or relative; what will be the day of his death; whether he will become wealthy; what is the cause of sickness; in what direction he should move when he changes his residence; whether he can repair his house without suffering calamity; whether he will draw a prize in a lottery; whether he had better purchase a certain slave; when a son will be born; when he will obtain official position; when he will get out of jail; whether a son or daughter will have a happy life; how a spirit may be propitiated; when one must marry in order to be happy; where to find a good husband for one's daughter; whether a dream is good or bad; whether it will be safe to cut down a certain tree; whether he may move a grave with safety; whether it will be well for a woman to be delivered of a child at her own house or whether she had better go to some other.

Divination is accomplished in any one of three ways, — with dice-boxes, pieces of money or Chinese characters. The first of these is the lowest, the second is a little more respectable, and the third, being performed with Chinese characters, may be adopted by a gentleman without incurring criticism. Many gentlemen learn to do their own divining in a crude sort of way.

The dice-box divination consists in shaking and throwing out from a dice-box eight little metal rods about the size of friction matches. Each rod has a different number of notches cut in it, and as each rod is put back after the throw, it will be seen that

in three throws, which forms a trial, there are many possible combinations. The *pansu* has learned a set formula for each combination, and so it is apparent that this formula must be in the form of an enigma, for it must answer any question that the client may ask. Let us suppose that the man has asked when his friend will get out of jail, and the answer comes: "If the net is old, the carp will break through." This he will forthwith explain to mean that as carp are always caught in winter the friend will languish in durance vile till winter comes. The skill of the *pansu* is exhibited in fitting the formula to the question in hand. They are a little more accommodating than the priests of the Delphic Oracle in Greece, where the client had to do the guessing himself.

The second form, called "money divination," is accomplished by the use of four, six or eight ancient Korean coins. Those with the seal character on them are the best, but any will do, provided they are old. The diviner shakes the coins in his hand and lets a certain number of them drop. The combination which appears tells him what formula to apply. There are hundreds of ways to manipulate the coins, and each *pansu* has his own favourite way, just as different cooks have their favourite recipes for preparing food.

The method of practising "book divination" is to ask the questioner in what year, what month, what day and what hour he was born. These four dates, taken two and two, in every combination give four characters, and from these the diviner makes up a verse of poetry. Then he determines which character best fits the case of his client. Using this as an index, he looks up the corresponding passage in his diviner's book, which he carries as faithfully as the surveyor does his table of logarithms, and the passage which he finds will be the enigma from which his client must extract an answer to his question.

Another form of book divination is carried on by the use of the volume called "Record of Previous Existence." This is based upon the fact that many Koreans believe the ills of the

present life are the punishments of sins committed in a previous life, and that present happiness is a reward for past goodness. Only when in trouble will one consult this kind of oracle. If a woman is cursed with a drunken husband and is driven to desperation, she consults the *pansu,* and he, after looking up the formula, tells her that in a previous existence she was a bullock-driver and her husband was the bullock, that she beat and abused him so cruelly that she was now doomed to be ill-treated by him in turn. But he tells her that if she will take a bundle of flax-stalks and tie them at seven places, as a corpse is tied for burial, and place it in the room and hide, her husband, coming home drunk, will mistake the bundle for his wife and beat it to pieces. This will take away his propensity to maltreating his wife. Another woman, who asked what she should do to insure the continued loyalty of her son to herself, was told that in a past life she had been very kind to a starving dog, and that providence had decreed that she should come into the world again and that the dog should become her son. If she continued to treat him well, she would have no trouble. A man's bullock was struck by lightning, and he consulted a *pansu* to find why this calamity overtook him. The seer told him to go back home and look carefully at the hide of the animal and he would find what an evil past it had had. The mystified farmer went and looked, and on one of the horns was written in fine Chinese characters the legend "In the days of the Tang Dynasty lived a Prime Minister, Yi Rim-po. After his death he was transformed nine times into a dancing-girl and three times into a bullock, but even so he could not expiate the crimes that he had committed; so at last Heaven smote him with a thunderbolt and thus cancelled the debt of vengeance." It is only necessary to add that this Yi Rim-po was one of the most corrupt officials China ever saw, which is saying a good deal.

Still another form of divination depends upon the "Thoughts on the Works of the Jade Emperor of Heaven." If a demon of disease is so malignant that nothing but the direct command of the deity can exorcise it, recourse will be had to this book.

Insanity is considered the worst of diseases and is caused by a most "poisonous" imp. The *pansu* comes to the house, invites all the household gods to a feast and asks them to secure the presence of the evil spirit. This accomplished, he feeds the ugly fellow and tells him to depart for ever. If this does not prove successful, he reads a magic formula from the book, which gives him power over the imp. The latter is seized and corked up in a bottle and is whipped. He may escape, and if so, he must be feasted again; but this time a peachwood cork is used and the beating is done with peach sticks, which reduces the spirit to helplessness. The bottle is then given to a *mudang* to go and bury, the direction in which she is to go being minutely specified. The cure is now complete.

"Spirit sending divination" is used to cure men at a long distance. "Ten-thousand spirit divination" is a sort of congress of all the spirits, at which the *pansu* presides. The "spirit imprisoning divination" gives a man a sort of amulet that will protect him from evil. "Spirit liberating divination" is used in case one of the spirits is in prison and the rest want to get him out. One of them goes to earth and afflicts a man with disease. The *pansu* intervenes, and the spirit tells him that he will leave if the *pansu* will secure the release of the imprisoned one, and he promises to go security for the spirit's future good behaviour.

In every Korean book-stall will be found a little volume called "The Six Marks of Divination," or sometimes "The Five Rules for Obtaining the Ten-thousand Blessings." It represents some of the grossest superstitions of the Korean people. It is the common people who make great use of this book, but the woman of the upper class is almost sure to have a volume hidden about the house, from which to cast the horoscope of her infant sons and daughters. It is a curious mixture of Buddhism, spiritism and fetichism. One can see at a glance how Buddhism has joined forces with the original elements in Korean religion to form a conglomerate that will suit all tastes.

We find, first, the "procession of the years." It tells what star rules each year of a person's life from the tenth to the sixty-fourth. It tells what he must do to insure comfort and success, and it tells, by means of an obscure simile, what the condition of the body will be. It begins at the tenth year, because before that time no one marries, nor does a boy shave his head and become a monk. In order to show the way it is done, we will quote two or three of the formulæ. For the eleventh year, for instance, we find that a boy will be under the influence of the "earth star" (Saturn), that his patron will be Yuraposal (a Buddhist saint), that he must pay particular attention to his body, which will resemble a *hawk in the ashes.* A girl in her eleventh year will be under the influence of the "man image star," her patron will be Kwaneumposal and it is her duty to show deference to the spirits. She is like a *deer in a deep gorge.*

And so it goes through the whole sixty-four years. The different stars are the Metal Star (Venus), Water Star (Mercury), Star Sun (Sun), Fire Star (Mars) and so on through the list. The patrons are a long list of Buddhist worthies. The duties are nominal, and the things that the body are like to are as follows: pig in hot water, deer in a blossom, hawk in the mountain, rat in the garden, wolf in the bag, pheasant in the ashes and lion in the river. In all there are eight animals, and the situations they find themselves in are twelve in number; river, garden, ravine, bag, field, ashes, grass, mountain, hot water, blossom, mill and hill. Among the animals there is no distinction between the good and the bad, but it is the combination that is unpropitious. The hawk in the ashes or the rat in the river, the pig in a bag and a hawk in a mill (rice-grinding mill) are evidently bad predicaments, while deer in the mountain, wolf in the field, rat in the garden and pig in the ashes are presumably happy combinations.

Then come the different star influences and their power over the destiny of a man or woman. For instance, in the Sun Star year, one will have many blessings, a good salary, a chance to

travel and good words from everybody, but in the first, fifth and ninth moons he will be censured or will lose money. In order to ward off these evils, one must cut out a disc of red paper on the fifteenth of the first moon, fasten it to a piece of wild cherry wood, stick it up on the roof and bow to the four points of the compass. This will save him from all anxiety. On the contrary, in the Fire Star year all will go wrong. One will be ill or will be censured. The house may burn down. In the third and ninth moons one is almost sure to be ill. In the fifth and tenth moons one of his sons or grandsons will lose money and must be on the lookout for robbers. He must not travel far nor must he engage a new servant. And yet there is safety for him if on the fifteenth of the first moon he will tear off the collar of his coat and burn it toward the south.

Another division of the book deals with the five elements, metal, wood, water, fire and earth. This form of divination is practised on the fifteenth of the first moon in order to find out whether luck will be good or bad during the year. The man takes in his hand five little discs of wood, each bearing one of the names of the elements on one side but blank on the other. Shaking them in his hand, he says: "Beneath the bright heavens I stand and pray, I who live in Whang-ha Province, town of Ha-ju, ward of Pu-yong, by name Kim Mun-suk. To the bright heavens I pray that I may truly be shown what will befall the present year, or good or ill." He then throws the discs upon the ground. The different combinations that result indicate, by reference to the book, what the fortune will be. If they are all blank but one, the fortune will be medium, unless that one be "water," in which case it means good luck. If all the characters turn up, it is an excellent omen. Water and wood make a good combination, because water floats wood. Fire and water are, rather unexpectedly, good, for they are so different that they do not interfere with each other. Metal and wood make a bad combination, because metal cuts wood. So on throughout the list, each combination telling the thrower what he may

expect of good and what he must avoid or put up with of evil.

Still another way to tell the fortune is to throw four little pieces of wood like half an inch of lead-pencil split in two. The combinations, that are made in three throws, of the flat or rounded sides that turn up, will tell what is to happen. Some of the formulæ are as follows: The man will be like a rat in a granary (lean in spring and summer and fat in autumn and winter), like a candle at night, like flowers meeting the spring-time, like a king without a realm, like a moth about a candle, like a stork that has lost his home, like a tortoise in a box, like a dragon in the sea, like a dead man come to life. Each of these tells its own story and needs no comment. A Buddhistic element is seen in the simile, like a monk who has returned to the world.

It will be seen that this book which we are describing is like a domestic medicine book in our own land. Those that cannot afford to hire a *mudang* to cure them will have recourse to its pages, and this accounts for the enormous sale which the volume enjoys. It affirms that the human body is subject to two kinds of diseases, — those which can be cured by medicine and those that require exorcism. Some people have foolishly tried to cure both kinds by drugs. The hermit Chang laid down the rules for exorcising the demons of disease, and he wisely said that if in any case exorcism does not succeed, it is certain that the disease is one that must be cured with medicine. Note the implication that exorcism should be tried first, which is a pretty piece of special pleading in behalf of the profession. The book tells on what days of the month special diseases are likely to break out, and the name of the spirit that causes them. Whichever one it is, the work must be begun by writing the name of the imp on a piece of white or yellow paper (according to the day on which it is done) together with the name of the point of the compass from which the spirit comes, wrap a five-cash piece in this paper and throw it out of the door at the imp. These imps are supposed to be the spirits of people that have died, and they are

specified as spirits of men who have died by accident away from home, aged female relatives, yellow-headed men, perjurers, men who have died by drowning and so on to the end of the list. In each case the exorcist is told to go a certain number of paces in some particular direction and throw the cash. The hermit wisely confined himself to diseases that will pass away in a few days by themselves, but it is a pity he did not exorcise the whole troop of devils with a good dose of castor oil.

The book gives a description of various sorts of calamities and indicates the way to avoid them. One can tell from the "Cycle of Years" when a misfortune is due to arrive, and in order to avoid it he must, upon the morning of his birthday, spread a mat on the ground, place three bowls of white rice on a table on the mat, also three plates of gluten-rice bread and three cups of wine. He must then bow nine times, spread three sheets of white paper over another table, wrap in each sheet a measure of white rice and hang them up over the door. Three years later it must be taken down, cooked and thrown to the spirit. Also during the first moon of the year in which the calamity is scheduled to arrive he must draw the picture of three hawks upon paper and paste them up in his room with the bills of the birds all pointing toward the door.

The medical portion of the book deals almost exclusively with female and children's diseases, showing that it is the women who use the work and not the men. It will be impossible to do more than indicate a few of the remedies that are used. The most common are poultice of cow's dung; twenty-one ginko nuts; the split kernel of an apricot seed with the word "sun" written on one side and "moon" on the other and then stuck together with honey; water in which the wooden pin of a nether millstone has been boiled; three live frogs; four boiled dog's feet; water in which burned hair has been boiled; the yellow clay in which a frog has been wrapped and burned to death; the saliva of a black cow; a boiled hen whose abdominal cavity has been filled with angle-worms. Such are a few of the remedies. In no case

is the patient urged to call in a physician. The writer evidently knew that the reader would probably not be able to afford the care of a physician.

Only once, far back in the eighties, was it my privilege to witness the curious ceremony of frightening away the "Heavenly Dog" that was going to swallow the moon. From the earliest antiquity eclipses have been looked upon with fear by the Koreans, and even though they have known for many centuries the cause of the phenomenon and were formerly able to predict an eclipse, yet the still more ancient custom of frightening away the animal persists.

A brisk walk of ten minutes brought us to the limits of the suburbs, and there we found a company of a thousand Koreans or more gathered on a circular piece of ground, which was surrounded by an amphitheatre of hills. They were grouped in silent companies on the sloping hillsides, and in their white garments looked like a congregation of very orderly ghosts. The central plot was covered with mats to form a dancing floor, and on either side was a huge bonfire. Around the edge of the circle sat the Korean orchestra, whose strains alone ought to have sufficed to scare the Heavenly Dog. At ten o'clock the shadow of the earth began to pass across the face of the moon. A sudden darkness fell upon the scene, and the two fires, no longer suffering competition, gleamed with a new intensity upon the still faces which pressed eagerly forward to catch the subtle meaning of the weird notes that the musicians produced. Only one who is "to the manner born," and who has in his blood the dash of mysticism born of the East, can get from that weird music all that the Korean can. All the time the moon is adumbrated the crowd stands silent, awed, intent. They know that it is all a mere play, but the dramatic element in their nature carries them back to those far days when their savage forbears stood transfixed with genuine fear lest the light of the moon be for ever darkened.

The moment the limb of the moon appears beyond the

shadow, and it becomes apparent that the Heavenly Dog has "bitten off more than he can chew," there is a sudden change in the music, a stir in the crowd. They press forward eagerly, and at that instant a man leaps into the centre of the ring, wearing a hideous mask and blood-red sleeves that hang down to the ground. The dance is not to be described in words. The impression that remains, after the years have mellowed the memory of the spectacle, is that there were two kinds of motion, one of the feet and one of the hands. Imagine a half-intoxicated man standing on one foot and trying to put a sock on the other. This was the principal figure that the feet cut. With both the long sleeves the man tries to defend himself against the attack of a very determined swarm of bees. This is the whole combination, first on one foot and then on the other, while the bees continue to get in their work. Before long other actors join the rout, and the performance becomes a mere exhibition of buffoonery, which soon becomes tiresome. But the white-coated crowd, the wild whirl of the dance, the weird snarl of the pipes and over all the fitful gleam of the great fires, — it all makes a picture not soon to be forgotten.

CHAPTER XXXI

SLAVERY

WE must briefly review the history of slavery in Korea before describing its present status. At the time of Kija, who came to Korea in 1122 B. C., slavery did not exist in China; but when that great coloniser took in hand the half-savage denizens of the peninsula, he found it necessary to enact stringent laws. Among the different forms of punishment decreed by him, we find that slavery was one. We cannot but admire the line of reasoning upon which he based what we believe to be a social evil. He said in effect: "God decrees that man shall live by his own exertions, each one earning a living by his own hands and obtaining both the necessities and luxuries of existence by his own personal effort. If, therefore, a man takes by wile or by force the fruits of another man's industry, he becomes joined to that man by a logical and moral bond. If he eats the other man's food, he belongs to the other man." Theft was therefore punished by slavery, the thief becoming the property of the man from whom he stole. It was possible for him to redeem himself by the payment of a large sum of money, but even after that he must remain a discredited member of society, an outcast. Adultery was likewise punished by slavery, but the male offender could not, for obvious reasons, become a slave in the house of the man he had wronged. He became a slave of the government, and the King gave him to one or other of the high officials.

This continued till the year 193 B. C., when Kijun, the last of the ancient line, was driven out by Wiman and fled to the southern part of the peninsula. The upheaval of the north disorganised society, and slavery disappeared under Wiman's short

rule. But Kijun carried the institution south with him and introduced it into his new kingdom of Mahan. It existed in the mild form in the early days of Silla (57 B. C.–918 A. D.), but could not have been very common, for only murderers were condemned to slavery. Meanwhile the Kingdom of Koguryu arose in the north (36 B. C.). Slavery did not exist there until the armies began the conquest of the wild Hyungno tribe. These people were taken and made slaves. Thus we find that when Buddhism began to gain a foothold on Korean soil in the fourth century, slavery existed in a mild form throughout the peninsula.

One curious effect of Buddhism was to do away with the institution of slavery. The exaggerated notion of the value of human and animal life entertained by that cult, together with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, aroused a decided sentiment against human slavery, and so the institution fell into desuetude throughout the peninsula in proportion as Buddhism made conquest of the country.

But after the entire peninsula was united by the first king of Koryu in 918 A. D. and Buddhism became rampant, the cult underwent a rapid deterioration. Its spirit dropped away, leaving nothing but the form. Luxury began to sap the life of the people, and slavery again lifted its head. In fact, the number of slaves increased to an enormous total, and exciting stories are told of how they revolted from time to time and fought bloody battles with their masters, only to be put down. On one occasion three hundred slaves had stones tied about their necks and were cast into a river.

When the Koryu dynasty was overthrown and the present one took its place, in 1392, there occurred a period of social house-cleaning in the peninsula; but general slavery continued up to the time of the great invasion by the Japanese Hideyoshi, 1592. This war killed off so many of the male population of Korea that when peace reigned once more, a law was promulgated forbidding the slavery of males and confining it to the gentler sex. This has continued till the present time, and the

great outstanding fact in regard to the slavery of Korea to-day is that there is not a single male slave in the domains of the Emperor of Korea.

In discussing the status of slavery, therefore, we have to do only with female slaves, and the first question that arises in the inquiring mind is as to the methods by which a woman can become a slave. There are four ways.

Let us suppose that a woman of the middle or lower class finds that she has lost all visible means of support, and must either become a beggar or a slave or else starve; or if perchance she is in great need of ready money to bury a parent or to support aged parents, she will go to an acquaintance and ask him to recommend her to one of his friends as a slave. This is done, and she is introduced into the house of her prospective purchaser. He looks her over, sets her to work, and satisfies himself that she is competent. He then pays her forty thousand, fifty thousand or as high as a hundred thousand cash for herself, and she gives a deed of her own person, made out in legal form. In place of a seal, she places her hand upon the paper and marks its outline with a brush pen, and by this she can easily be identified. She is now a slave. The transaction does not come under the cognisance of the government, but is a private contract. Formerly only men of the higher class were allowed to hold slaves, and it is only during the last fifty years that Koreans of the middle class have been allowed to hold them. This is one of the marked features of the rapid demolition of social barriers that has been taking place during the past half-century. A woman of the upper class can sell herself into slavery only by disguising her high birth and so deceiving her purchaser, for no gentleman would knowingly buy a lady's person, not only because of the innate impropriety of the transaction, but because he would subject himself to the most caustic criticism of his peers.

The second way in which a woman could become a slave was as follows. If a gentleman was convicted of treason (or, formerly, of counterfeiting as well), he was either executed or

banished, and all the female inmates of his house became slaves. They were given by the government to high officials, but as a rule it was not long before such women were liberated. They were never sold from one house to another.

If a woman slave dies, her daughter takes her place and enters the ranks of slaves. She is called a "seed slave," as she follows the mother in the ordinary line of descent. Under every circumstance a slave dying, still unredeemed, has to give her daughter to be a slave in her place. It is very probable that when a slave dies leaving a young daughter, this young girl will go with the master's daughter as part of her wedding dowry.

There is a fourth way in which a woman may become a slave. She is poor, and finds it impossible to live. She wants a home of some kind, and so voluntarily offers herself as a slave without any compensation, except the food, clothes and shelter that will be given her. One would suppose that such a slave would be of a higher grade than the one that has sold herself, but the opposite is the case. The sold slave can redeem herself at any time by paying back the exact amount that she received, but a woman who becomes a voluntary slave cannot be liberated by any means.

As all slaves are women, it will be necessary to inquire how their marriages are arranged and what is the status of the husband. It is manifestly to the interest of the owner to have his slave marry, for if she dies without issue there will be no one to take her place. A bought slave is allowed to select her partner about as she pleases. She will probably marry some day-labourer or coolie in the vicinity. She has her little room on her master's compound, usually near the gate quarters; and her husband is allowed to occupy it with her free of rent. He owes nothing to the master of the house, and does no work for him excepting of his own accord. In the case of a slave who is not bought, the master may let her marry or not, as he wishes; but ordinarily he will consent. After she has worked several years her master not infrequently lets her go, and even sets her up in some little

business or other. The husband of a slave has no right to eat the rice that she receives from her master. He must bring in his own provender, and the two will "pool" their interests and get along very snugly. Of course she will try to get enough out of her master to feed them both, but in any case the children eat of the master's rice till they are old enough to work for themselves.

We have seen that if a slave dies her daughter takes her place. If there are several daughters the eldest takes the mother's place, and the rest go free. If the eldest daughter dies before her mother, then the master selects one of the younger ones to take the mother's place. If a slave dies and the eldest daughter takes up her work, but dies immediately, none of the other daughters can be compelled to step into the vacant place. All male children are naturally free and cannot be enslaved. They owe nothing to their mother's master, and as soon as they can go alone they no longer feed out of his bag.

The slave does all the rough work about the house. She does the washing, brings the water from the neighbourhood well, goes to market, helps with the cooking, walks as a mourner in her master's funeral procession, runs errands and makes herself generally useful. In the country she will work as an ordinary field hand. She is not the familiar servant of the lady of the house, and she seldom acts as lady's-maid, nor is she ever called to do any of the sewing or nursing. Her place is in her master's kitchen or yard, and not in the chamber of her mistress.

Korean folk-lore is full of stories of faithful and unfaithful slaves.

CHAPTER XXXII

FUNERAL PROCESSION — GEOMANCY

A ROYAL death demands universal lament. The entire nation must assume a mourning garb, the colour of which is not black, as with us, but the natural colour of sack-cloth, — a dirty yellow. The chief mourners must be particular as to the colour, but the populace as a whole adopts white. As this is the ordinary colour for Korean clothing, it becomes necessary only to doff their black hats and put on white ones. Those who are very poor can compound with the law by pasting white paper over their black hats. No bright colours must appear on any portion of the body.

The body of the dead is partially embalmed, and laid in an artificially cooled room, where it remains five months, the legal interval within which the royal dead cannot be interred. A few days after the announcement of the death all the high officials meet before the great gate of the palace, and, seated on their mats, lament the departure of the illustrious deceased. Then the preparations begin. Money pours in from the provinces, the guilds are informed what services will be required of them, the geomancers are sent out to find a propitious site for the tomb, and thousands of men are set to work making the various paraphernalia that will be needed to bring the occasion off with sufficient *éclat.*

As the day for the grand procession draws near, people begin to flock in from the country to see the sight, and every inn is full to overflowing. All the government departments are intent upon nothing else, and ordinary business is at a standstill. Several days before the great event, there are trial processions in which the participants are trained for the performance of their

various functions. In order to witness the pageant to best advantage, one must secure in advance the upper story of one of the very few two-story buildings on the Great Bell Street, which runs through the centre of the town.

At midnight a small company of foreigners sallied out and made their way down through the crowded streets to the building that they had preëmpted. A perfect sea of lanterns showed the innumerable throng hurrying to their places of observation. Soon after we had secured our places a sudden hush in the surging, screaming crowd told us that the vanguard of the procession was at hand. The people pressed to the sides of the street and stood perfectly quiet. This great thoroughfare is about one hundred feet wide, and gives ample opportunity for the full display of such a pageant. Looking far up the street to the left, we could see the advance runners of the funeral cortège moving slowly down between two solid walls of hushed humanity. First came a number of torch-bearers, whose duty it was to light the great brush torches that are planted at intervals all down the avenue. These torches are as thick as a man's body and ten feet high; and as they flickered, crackled and then sent up a spire of lurid, smoky flame, they seemed to turn everything blood-red, and made the advancing ranks of the procession look more like a company of fiends than of human beings.

The main body of the procession was flanked on either side by a line of soldiers who carried in lieu of muskets silk flags embroidered with Chinese characters. Some of them bore long paddles, with which they were supposed to keep the crowd back if it pressed too close. The first division of the procession itself was composed of thirteen large sedan chairs draped in red, blue and green brocaded silks, and borne on the shoulders of a dozen carriers whose liveries were pink and white. These chairs are supposed to carry the thirteen historians whose duty it is to write the achievements of the deceased. The absolute silence with which these figures glide by adds much to the weirdness and solemnity of the occasion. The road is not paved, and their

shoes are soft, sandal-like arrangements that make no noise. Next come a number of banners of Oriental richness, borne aloft on bamboo poles, each surmounted by a handsome bunch of peacock feathers. From the cross-bar hangs the banner itself, ten feet long by four feet wide. The central panel is of white brocaded silk, on which are sewed Chinese characters in black and red. The border is of another colour of silk, and is deeply serrated at the edge. From the ends of the cross-bars hang lanterns and bells. The pole is covered with red felt, on which are gilt figures of men, birds and dragons. Each of the great guilds of Seoul is required to furnish one of these costly trinkets. They represent an expenditure of about one hundred and fifty dollars each. Next come a crowd of gaudily dressed bearers, carrying aloft on poles long scrolls of white paper on which are written eulogies of the dead by the most famous scholars of the land. They are substitutes for an obituary address. Behind these comes the chair of state which the deceased was wont to ride, a sumptuous affair borne high above the heads of a score of sturdy fellows. It is draped and canopied with costliest silks, and is bedizened on every side with bangles, knots and tassels. Before it is borne the royal red umbrella, and behind it, festooned upon a hundred poles or more, is carried the blue cloth fence within which the palace women ride on ponies to the place of burial. It is to protect them from the curious eyes of the crowd. It is not unlikely that this is a remnant of the ancient custom of burying several girls alive in the tomb of a dead king. History records one significant instance in which a king of Silla gave orders that in his case this barbaric custom must be omitted.

The next feature is a pack of hobgoblins or imps with enormous masks over their faces. These masks are three feet broad, and have two pairs of staring eyes and hideous grinning mouths. These are supposed to frighten away all evil spirits and make the obsequies propitious. Behind these, after an interval, comes the master of ceremonies, mounted upon a splendid white horse, and surrounded by liveried attendants and armed troops. The trap-

pings of the horse reach almost to the ground, and the robes of the rider are of the most gorgeous description. He is a general of the highest rank. He bears in his hand the wand of authority, and for the time being holds the power of life and death. There are two catafalques exactly alike, and no one is supposed to know in which one the body lies. A description of one will suffice for both. It rests upon a heavy framework that is carried on the shoulders of one hundred and eight bearers. Thick transverse poles have heavy padded ropes run fore and aft between them, so that the shoulders of the bearers may not be galled. On the high framework is a structure like a little house, ten feet long, six feet high and five feet broad. The roof and sides of this pavilion are painted and draped with the gaudiest colours. All the tints of the rainbow and several others compete for the supremacy. One man stands on the framework immediately in front of the pavilion, and another stands behind it, facing back. The one in front holds a bell in his hand, and he keeps time so that the men may step together. Ropes a hundred feet long extend forward from the catafalque and also back, and a long line of men hold these, and are supposed to pull forward or back, as it may be necessary to ease the unwieldy thing down a hill or draw it up one.

By far the most interesting and novel feature of the whole procession follows this catafalque. It is six enormous paper horses made of paper stuck over a framework of wood. They are about ten feet high, and are mounted upon great carts so that they loom full fourteen feet from the ground. The anatomy of these monsters is wonderful and fearful, and their size makes one think of his boyhood days when he read of the siege of ancient Troy. These are to be burned at the tomb, and will furnish a means of locomotion for the deceased in the world beyond. It is very plain that Confucianism is not the only religion of these people, nor Buddhism either, for the most distinctive things about this great ceremony are neither the one nor the other, but relics of the aboriginal nature worship of the

IMPERIAL "FUNERAL BAKED MEATS"

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people. In the rear of all come a company of foreign-drilled troops who present a striking contrast to the medieval pageant that has gone before.

The cost of such a funeral varies with circumstances. If it is a king that is being buried, it may cost half a million dollars, but in case it be a prince or princess it may come within a hundred thousand. In any case it is a severe drain upon the finances of the country, not merely because of the monetary outlay, but because it disorganises everything for the time being, and through adventitious causes brings great loss to the people.

GEOMANCY

It will be a sad day when Nature loses all her mystery and when we can project the cathode ray of science into every crack and cranny of this over-classified world, — when we shall put, as it were, a revolver to the head of the Sibyl and compel her to rearrange the scattered leaves, when we shall reduce to grammar the leaf language of the Dordonian oak. No one seems satisfied to-day unless he has his eye at a microscope or a telescope. Wordsworth had the present age in mind when he spoke of the man who would "peep and botanise upon his mother's grave." The very children know there is no pot of gold beneath the end of the rainbow and that Santa Claus is a myth. But the Korean is as yet untouched by this passion for classification. He is as full of myth and legend, of fairy lore and goblin fancy, as any minstrel of the middle ages. Nature is full of the mysterious, and for that reason speaks to him in some sort with greater authority than she does to us.

Korean geomancy might be a page torn from some old wizard's book or copied from a Druid's scroll. It forms a distinct profession here, though no guild of geomancers exists. By some unwritten law the ranks of the profession are recruited only from the country, as no Seoul man is eligible. This is because the geomancer is occupied almost exclusively in finding

propitious grave sites, and so the dwellers in the country are much better qualified than the denizens of the metropolis. It is ordinarily the Rip Van Winkle style of man, who prefers walking over the hills with his dog and pipe rather than doing an honest day's work, that evolves into a geomancer.

The first step in his novitiate is the mastery of the book called "The Great, Important, Celestial Instrument." Having learned the theoretical side, he then begins to take practical lessons under a competent teacher. They wander over the hills together, discussing the merits of the different burial sites and determining their relative values. A man's prospects in life may be blighted by burying his father's body in an unpropitious spot. More agues, sprains, murrains and blights are caused by this than by any or all other causes. When the candidate has been all over his allotted district, and has studied all the available places and has made out a mental list of charges, ranging from several hundred dollars for a first-class site down to a few cents for an indifferent one, he graduates, buys him a *yundo,* "wheel picture," — in other words, a compass, — and is ready to "hang out his shingle." He has now taken the degree of "Earth Specialist," or, as we might say, the degree of B.E., Bachelor of Earth.

We must imagine him, then, in his office waiting for trade. A young man comes in and states that his father is dead and a suitable burial site must be found at once. The geomancer accompanies the young man to his home, where a substantial meal is set forth, to be washed down with plenty of wine. This forms the retaining fee. He then puts out feelers in all directions to learn about how much the young man is able to pay, and, having made up his mind on this cardinal point, he leads the youth over the hills and discourses on the various sites.

The first question to be asked about any site is whether it has a good "advancing dragon." This is the line or range of hills leading down to the site. The declivity where a long unbroken line of hills drops to the level of the valley is usually a

good site. But if the line of hills is short, or if the continuity of the range is broken at any point by a deep intersecting valley, if the range is mostly shorn of timber, or if it is rugged and abounding in precipices, the site will be of comparatively little value. The perfect site is rare and hard to find. It is called a "mountain line that curves around and sees its great-grandfather." Each of the points that form the chain is looked upon as the parent of the next lower one, and so, when the line curves so that from the lowest eminence the highest one is visible, it means that the latest descendant can always look upon his ancestor.

Next in importance is "the prospect." To be perfect it must be toward the south, though the east or west are not bad. It must never be toward the north, for it looks away from the sun and its colour is black. The blue dragon and white tiger must also be attended to. These represent the east and west sides of the grave, where the flanking hills must be of equal length or their influence will be evil. The most dangerous thing is a *kyubong*, or "spying peak." If from the grave site there can be seen the top of a hill peeping over the top of a nearer one, it means that the descendants of the man buried there are fated to become robbers. A genius, or spirit of evil, crouches behind the nearer hill and keeps its baleful eye upon the last resting-place of the dead.

If everything is right and the pay is guaranteed, the geomancer gets out his "wheel picture," lays it on the ground and determines the exact direction in which the grave must face. If there are other graves in sight, it must not point toward any of them. The remoteness or proximity of other graves exercises an important influence. The operator next lays the "golden well." This is a frame composed of two transverse and two lateral rods in the shape of the Chinese character for well. A mark is made all around inside this parallelogram, and the ground is broken for the grave. The depth to which it must be dug, and the position that the chief mourner must occupy at

the burial ceremony, must be carefully determined or there will be literally "the devil to pay."

The geomancer's part in the interment may now be said to end, — that is, after he has pocketed his fee. But the chances are that he or some other geomancer will be called in at some future time to examine the grave and see that everything is right. Although every precaution has been taken, it frequently happens that the dead man's relatives get into trouble. If so, and if there be no other visible cause for the trouble, it is set down to the fact that something is the matter with the ancestor's grave. The geomancer is called in and, if there is plenty of money in sight, he may decide that something serious is the matter with the grave, or that it requires only slight alterations. There are special formulæ for discovering the mysterious cause of the trouble. These are all given in the book which has been mentioned. At the very worst the geomancer may discover that the body has run away! Koreans solemnly aver that such graves have been opened and that invariably the corpse is absent. If so, it must be hunted up instanter; and it may be remarked that this chasing of a long-buried corpse about the country is not the least gruesome part of the geomancer's business, and might well deter nervous or excitable people from entering the profession; but fortunately Koreans have no nerves. It is claimed that a successful geomancer will run his game to earth within twenty-four hours, and when the afflicted relative digs at the indicated spot, he always discovers the object of his search. This search is carried out according to what is called "The Old Grave Magic Rite."

CHAPTER XXXIII

BURIAL CUSTOMS

BURIAL customs are not uniform throughout Korea, for the poor and the low-class people omit many of the finer points which are never forgotten in the case of a gentleman of means. If, then, we describe the treatment of the dead among the wealthy people of the upper class, it will be simply a task of elimination to describe that of any class in Korean society. For this purpose, let us take a Korean gentleman of means, the head of a household, and inquire how he is treated from the time he is known to be dying until his funeral obsequies are completed.

When he is found to be desperately ill, he is taken from his own chamber and removed to some other apartment. The Koreans have the notion that the change may possibly check the course of the disease. This is not akin to putting the dying man outside the house on a mat. This is done only by the lower and more superstitious classes, who believe that the death will pollute the house and make it unlucky.

When the patient is evidently *in articulo mortis,* he is taken back to his own chamber, and all his immediate family come in and sit in perfect silence about the room. A light piece of cotton batting is put to the dying man's mouth that the exact moment of death may be recorded. When the breath ceases to stir the cotton, death is supposed to have occurred, though in many cases, of course, life is not yet extinct.

When the man is pronounced dead, a blanket is thrown over the body, but no one begins to wail yet, for it might disturb the disembodied spirit which may still be hovering near. An hour passes, and then the family assembles again and the wailing

commences. During this process, which is audible at some distance, the sentiments given expression to are almost all in commiseration of the dead. He is pitied for having died. His virtues are not commonly recited on such occasions, nor is reference made to his survivors, though there is no rule that would forbid this. In the wailing no subjective element appears. The wailers do not complain that they are bereft, nor wonder how they are to get along without the departed father or husband. After an hour of wailing some near relative, not a member of the household, or an intimate friend of the family remains to watch the body, and all others leave the room.

One of the trusted servants of the house, or some friendly neighbour, not of the upper class, takes in his hands an inner coat of the dead man, mounts to the roof of the house and takes his stand directly over where the body lies. This coat is of native cotton, never of silk or any imported goods, and has probably been kept in the family wardrobe for years for this special purpose. Standing thus, the man grasps the collar of the coat with his left hand and the hem at the bottom with his right and waves it three times toward the north. At the first shake he cries aloud the full name of the deceased, at the second shake the name of the highest rank that he ever attained, and at the third he announces that the man is dead. The reason for shaking the garment is that, being something intimately associated with the person of the man, it forms the credentials of the one who is announcing the demise, as much as to say, "Here, behold the inner coat of such and such a man of such and such a rank; him I announce to be dead." The reason for shaking it toward the north is because shadows fall to the north. It is the direction of the shades, its colour being black. This is done not only to announce the death to other living people, but also that the spirit of the dead man may hear, and so be sure that the momentous event has been properly published. The reason for shaking the garment three times is because of the dead man's *in, eui,* and *ye,* which may be trans-

lated respectively his "original nature," "righteousness" and "etiquette." This important ceremony completed, the man brings down the coat and spreads it over the body of its owner.

The family now assemble again and wail for fifteen minutes by the clock, after which the body is lifted from the floor and placed upon a plank, which is supported by two boxes made specially for the purpose. The head must be toward the south and raised a little higher than the feet. A screen is drawn around the body.

The next thing in order is to make the *hon-pak-kwe,* or "spirit ghost box." This is of wood, about eighteen inches long and twelve inches wide and deep. It is supposed to hold in some occult way the spirit of the dead. The box is neatly papered, and inside is placed a paper case in the shape of a box, and inside this is a piece of paper on which is written the name of the dead. Sometimes only blank paper is put in, and rarely both name and title are written. This spirit ghost box is first laid at the head of the dead man.

After these preliminaries have been arranged, a man is chosen from among the near relatives of the deceased to have charge of the funeral ceremonies, and one of the trusted servants is chosen to handle all the funeral expenses.

All the mourners, by which we mean the immediate family, look upon themselves as in some sense criminals upon whom rests the responsibility of the man's death. They put aside all coloured clothing and all silk, and dress in plain linen and cotton. All jewelry is put away; the hair is taken down. No boiled rice is eaten, but a kind of rice gruel takes its place. The mourners now go to the apartment of the dead. It has been divided down the middle by a curtain, and the men take their places on one side and the women on the other. Meanwhile the master of ceremonies has sent out written notices to the particular friends of the family, and they come, both men and women, and offer their condolences. The number of notices sent out varies from fifty to five hundred. If the recipient lives

within reasonable distance, it is *de rigueur* for him to go and offer his condolences. It is customary to take along a little present of money, rice, linen, paper, candles or tobacco.

The one who is watching beside the body now takes warm water and washes it, using not a cloth but a piece of clean paper, while the family sit in the adjoining room or busy themselves in giving away to needy neighbours the old clothes of the deceased. In preparing the body for burial, the hair is tied up loosely, not in a regular top-knot, and all the combings, which have been sedulously preserved for years, are worked into the hair. All the teeth which have been extracted from the mouth of the dead man since his youth and all the finger-nail and toe-nail parings are put together in his pouch and laid beside him.

Meanwhile others have been busy making the new garments in which the body is to be dressed. Every part of the garments and the fittings of the casket must be new, — the mattress, blanket, pillow, overcoat, coat, waistcoat, trousers, socks, wristlets, leggings, head-band and all. The body is now removed to a table specially prepared for the purpose, and a full dinner is placed before it. The relatives have by this time gathered from far and near, and they all assemble in the room adjoining and kneel, the men toward the east and the women toward the west. The relatives to the sixth remove are represented, and they all wail in concert. A pillow is brought, and each mourner comes forward in his turn and, placing his forehead on the pillow, performs a special ceremony.

The "spirit ghost box" is now brought and placed again at the head, with some of the man's clothes beneath it. His mouth is opened, and in it is placed some flour made of gluten rice. This is for the purpose of holding in place a certain "jewel" that is put between the lips. This precious object is called the *mu-gong-ju*, or "pearl without a hole." It is not a real pearl, but a hard substance taken from the shell of a certain kind of huge clam that is found only near the mouth of the Nak-tong River. It is a rough substance and has no lustre, and it is

A PRINCE'S TOMB

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extremely rare. The clams are taken only by the net, and only one in about ten thousand is said to yield a *mu-gong-ju*. These are not sold, but are handed down from father to son as precious heirlooms. The Koreans believe that they have the power of self-propagation by a process of division, like certain polyps.

The body is now dressed in the new clothes and placed on a table specially made for the purpose. A screen is drawn around it, and over the screen is hung a banner on which is written the man's name and honours, and on a little table are placed some of his effects, such as pen, ink-stone, spectacles and seals. This completes the first day's work.

On the morning of the second day the professional undertaker comes and arranges the clothes of the deceased with great care, and proceeds to tie the body up with cords made of twisted paper. In tying the waist-cord he arranges the knot so as to resemble the Chinese character *sim,* for it is believed that all the canonised spirits arrange theirs so.

On the morning of the third day the undertaker brings the casket, which is not nailed, but is carefully dovetailed and fastened with wooden pegs. The bottom of it is covered an inch deep with gluten rice flour. This is to form a sort of cushion into which the body will sink a little, and so be prevented from moving from side to side as it is being carried to the grave. When everything is ready for placing the body in the casket, the sons of the dead man wash their hands, or perhaps take a full bath, and then go in and place the body carefully in its final receptacle. The face is covered with a very thin film of cotton batting, and beside the body are placed the finger-nail and toe-nail parings and the teeth which have been already referred to. The remaining space in the coffin is tightly packed with old clothes of the deceased, so as to prevent any movement of the body, and the cover is fastened on with wooden pegs. The coffin is invariably made of pine. The reason is fourfold. The pine, being an evergreen, is, in Korean eyes, the symbol of manhood, for it never withers or casts its leaves until it dies.

In the second place, serpents and other reptiles will never go near it. In the third place, the pine never rots at the core, leaving the trunk a mere shell. In the fourth place, pine wood, when placed in the ground, decays rapidly and evenly, which, singularly enough, is a prime qualification with the Korean. Anything that tends to retard the process of dissolution is considered very unpropitious. This is in striking contrast to the belief of the ancient Egyptians and of most ignorant and superstitious peoples.

The fourth day after the death of a Korean gentleman is called the day for putting on mourning. The only ones who wear full mourning are the wife, the sons, the daughters and the daughters-in-law of the deceased. For the sons this consists of a wide mourner's hat made of bamboo, a head-band of coarse linen, a coat of the same material, a waist-cord of hemp, leggings of coarse linen, straw shoes and a *posun,* or face screen, of linen attached to two sticks which are held in the hands. For women, mourning consists in wooden hairpins, clothes of coarse linen and straw shoes.

After mourning has been assumed, all the mourners assemble in the room adjoning that in which the body lies, and wail, the men facing the east and the women the west. Only those who are very old may sit. No conversation is allowed. From this day all the mourners may return to their usual diet.

The undertaker places the head-bands, combs and other toilet articles of the dead beside the casket, as if he would soon wake up and use them. Fruits, vegetables, meats, nuts and wine are offered, and then the mourners come in and bow and wail again. If the burial should be delayed for three months, as is often the case, the family must come in and bow before the body on the first and fifteenth of each month. Whenever fresh fruit comes into the market, some of it must be offered the dead before the family can taste of it.

The interment usually takes place on the fifth, seventh, or ninth day after death, but in the case of high officials or very

wealthy people it is usually delayed three months. This gives opportunity to make more elaborate preparations.

A burial site will long ago have been selected through the services of a *chigwan,* or geomancer. This is a science in itself, and has been described in a separate chapter. The day before the burial the geomancer and the chief mourner go to the grave site and superintend the marking out of the grave, being careful to drive stakes at the four corners, at the head, at the foot and in the middle of the grave plot. Later in the day the mourners bring food and sacrifice to the spirit of the mountain, calling aloud the name of the dead and announcing that he is to be buried at that spot. The chief mourner returns home and announces to the dead that a burial place has been prepared. Those that have remained at the burial site dig the grave, making the measurements very exact, so that the casket will fit. At the bottom they put sand mixed with lime, and pound it down hard, so as to form a solid bed for the casket to rest upon.

Two memorial stones have already been prepared. They are exact counterparts of each other. One of them is to be set up and the other to be buried in the ground at the foot of the grave. If the one that is set up is injured or destroyed, this buried one can be dug up and erected in its place. These stones are called the *chisŭk,* or "stone descriptive of the character of the dead."

The next work is the preparation of the *sangyu,* or "death carriage," by which is meant the bier or catafalque. In ordinary cases this is rented for the occasion, but in extraordinary cases a special one is made. It is supposed to resemble in shape the ordinary covered two-man sedan chair, or litter, in which people are carried about in lieu of wheeled vehicles; but it is made longer to accommodate the recumbent posture of the dead. It is covered with a rigid canopy, or roof, and the sides are enclosed. The whole is painted in the most gaudy and fantastic colours, a mixture of the Korean cardinal colours, — red, blue, yellow, white and black, — and is supported on men's shoulders by a network of poles and ropes. The number of carriers is

determined by the size of the bier and the splendour of the occasion. Anywhere from eight to forty men may be employed to carry the "death carriage." They are all dressed in coarse linen, with tall linen caps.

One of the most important points about a funeral is the making of the *sinju*, or "spirit master." It might be better described as the "spirit tablet," for it consists of a plain piece of chestnut wood ten inches long, two inches wide and three-quarters of an inch thick. It is left unpainted, and nothing whatever is written on it, but with it is placed a sheet of paper on which are written the name and office of the deceased. This piece of wood is placed, together with the paper, in a small box made specially for it and painted black. This *sinju*, or "spirit tablet," is made of chestnut wood, because the Koreans believe that when a chestnut sprouts and the meat of the nut is used in feeding the growing sprout, the shell of the nut does not decay, but remains attached to the root of the tree until the latter dies. Thus they believe the seed is preserved, and this typifies the long life of the family. This tablet is kept in the house for three years, until the period of mourning is passed, and then it is placed in the *sadang*, or "soul house," preferably described as the ancestral tablet house. One of these tablet houses is found connected with the residence of every well-to-do gentleman. The use of a separate tablet house has of late fallen somewhat into disuse because of the danger of having the tablet stolen and held to ransom. To lose the *sinju* is an unspeakable calamity. Before burial, it was formerly the custom to carry the body of the dead to the tablet house, to let him take a look at it, but of late years it has been considered sufficient to carry the "spirit box" to the tablet house instead; but at the same time the casket must be moved a little, as if it were to be taken also.

All is now ready for the burial procession, which is a grand spectacular display. On it the heir sometimes squanders half of his patrimony. Korean folk-lore is full of stories of how the son, out of filial piety, spent the whole of his patrimony on his

STONE IMAGE NEAR TOMB

father's funeral. Nowadays such devotion is found only in books and traditions. The funeral procession forms in the late afternoon, and a start is made just at twilight. The reason for this is that at this hour the streets are less likely to be crowded; it is the quiet time of the day, and the spirit of the dead is less liable to be disturbed by the street cries and by the shouts of hucksters. It seems from this as if the Koreans believe that the spirit of the dead still accompanies the dead body.

First in the procession come two men abreast, dragging after them torches made of brushwood. The lighted ends trail on the ground, leaving a wake of sparks. Now and again they will raise the torches and whirl them about their heads until they break into flame again. Behind these comes the procession between two lines of lantern-bearers, each lantern being made of an iron frame, over which is draped red and blue gauze silk. This silk prevents the candles being blown out by the wind, but it is quite diaphanous.

First in the procession proper comes the master of ceremonies mounted on a horse, and behind him marches a man bearing aloft the *myungjung*, or banner, inscribed with the name and honours of the deceased. Then comes a line of lanterns across the street, connecting the lines of lanterns on the sides. Then comes a sort of cabinet or shrine, containing the spirit box and the spirit master or tablet. On either side of it march the female slaves of the deceased, with enormous piles of hair on their heads. They may number from two to half a dozen. Then, after another line of lanterns, comes the catafalque, which surges along slowly upon a mass of writhing shoulders, the bearers chanting a weird song, which enables them to keep in step. They have been given copious draughts of wine, and it is only their numbers that keep them on their feet. If the deceased is of high rank, a man will be standing on the bier on the front of the casket, and ringing a bell and marking time for the bearers, and another stands at the back for the same purpose.

Along either side of the catafalque walk a number of banner

carriers, each banner recording the merits of the deceased. These are often sent by the friends of the dead, and correspond to the flowers that are sent as tokens of love in the West. Immediately behind the catafalque comes the chief mourner, the eldest son of the deceased, in a "chair" covered with coarse linen, and on either side walk the husbands of his slaves. The other members of the bereaved family follow in single file, their chairs being flanked by the husbands of the slaves of the dead man's relatives. Then come the distant relatives and the friends of the deceased, and the whole company is completed by a howling crowd of street boys, who add noise if not dignity to the obsequies.

It is forbidden to bury a body inside the walls of Seoul, nor can the dead be carried out of any of the gates at will; but two of the gates are reserved for this purpose, the so-called "Water-mouth Gate" and the "Little West Gate." In times of pestilence, when a thousand people are dying a day in Seoul, as happened in the summer of 1886, it is easy to imagine that these gates are thronged with one stream of funeral processions. Especially was this so at that time, for the gates were closed and locked between nine o'clock at night and four o'clock the next morning.

Arriving at the burial site, the catafalque is placed under a temporary awning, and the whole party spend the night in a neighbouring village or in extemporised booths. Early in the morning the banner inscribed with the name of the dead is spread over the coffin and a little food is offered. After all have bowed and wept, the casket is placed on two transverse poles and carried to the grave. A compass is used to make sure that the casket lies in precisely the proper direction. A piece of black silk is placed over it, and upon this a thin board is laid. Lime is packed in on the sides and over the top to a depth of two inches, and then the grave is filled in with earth and lime mixed.

It is a question whether the shape and appointments of a Korean grave are not the most beautiful in the world. The

THE AMERICAN METHODIST CHURCH, SEOUL

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gentle southern slope of a hill is dug into so as to form a wide flat space; the earth thus excavated is formed into a crescent-like bank all around the north, east and west sides of the plot. In the centre, between the arms of this crescent, the grave is dug, and when the earth is piled up on it, the shape is that of an exact hemisphere. In front the ground is terraced down to the original slope of the hill. Back of the grave and on the two sides a thick grove of pine-trees is planted. Nicely turfed and well taken care of, this grave is simply exquisite in its simplicity and neatness. These little groves of pines about the graves form bright spots in an otherwise rather forbidding landscape. It must not be supposed that all graves are arranged as elaborately as this. The common people bury anywhere and everywhere, and so carelessly oftentimes that dogs and foxes dig into the graves and expose the bones of the dead.

In the case of very wealthy men or of princes, the grave site will be ornamented with stone figures of men and animals, arranged on either side and facing each other. Before the mound itself there will be a smooth polished stone, which is used as a table on which to place the sacrificial food each year.

The desecration of a grave is one of the most serious crimes in the Korean penal code. It is, of course, a capital offence. In our own land children are sometimes kidnapped and held to ransom, but in Korea it is the dead that are kidnapped, and a Korean will always give more for the return of his father's corpse than he would for his living son. Not infrequently a man finds a placard set up beside his ancestral grave stating that the head of the corpse has been taken away, but will be returned if a certain amount of money, always an enormous sum, is delivered at a certain specified place and time. A self-respecting Korean will put in pawn his whole estate to get back the body of his parent, or any missing part of it.

CHAPTER XXXIV

MODERN IMPROVEMENTS

IF a traveller who visited Korea twenty years ago should come back here in this year of grace 1906, he would be startled at the material changes that have been effected because of the opening of the country to foreign intercourse. But if he should make excursions from the open ports and the main centres of commerce, he would soon discover that, with the exception of the six hundred miles of railroad and of the telegraph lines, these evidences of material advancement are almost wholly confined to those centres.

Japanese energy and capital have transformed Fusan from an insignificant fishing village into a thriving city with water works, electric lights, commodious hotels, banks, museums and imposing municipal structures. The same may be said in lesser degree of Wonsan, Mokpo and Kunsan. Chemulpo is the most important port of entry as yet. Her proximity to the capital has won her this distinction, but the trunk railway terminus at Fusan must eventually push her ahead, especially when she becomes a port of call for the great trans-Pacific steamship lines. Chemulpo is, however, still a distinctly live place. Real estate in the foreign or Japanese quarters brings from twenty to thirty yen per square metre, which gives us a glimpse of the genuine life of the place. Not only has the Japanese population passed the ten thousand line, but the Koreans have flocked in until they aggregate some thirty thousand. The foreign town is fairly well built, though as yet there are few public buildings of note. The splendid sea-view from the steep side-hill on which most of the foreigners' houses are built makes it a very attractive place to live. A mile-long bund affords facilities for handling the

commerce of the place, but as yet large quantities of freight have to lie out on the bund exposed to the weather, except so far as it can be protected by tarpaulins. There is no better indication of the life of this port than the fact that trade is always in advance of the facilities for handling and storing it.

As for Seoul, the changes have been equally great, though its superior size makes it more difficult for us to get a bird's-eye view of them, as we can do at Chemulpo or Fusan. The first important innovation was the abrogation of the rule that the gates of the city should be locked every night before nine o'clock and not opened without special orders from the King until morning. The city wall, especially on the south side, has become a nuisance, since it blocks traffic; and it is only a matter of time when the picturesque old battlements, which look down from their half-millennial height upon the impertinence of galvanised iron roofs, will be levelled. Already it has become necessary to plan for the enlargement of the South Gate, which is only eighteen feet wide, and through which flows a very large fraction of the entire trade of the capital. Here, too, the price of real estate has increased tenfold during the past ten years and has doubled during the past year.

In spite of all that has been said about the filth of Seoul, it is a fairly clean place as Far Eastern cities go. Those who come direct from Peking or other inland cities of China exclaim in admiration over the broad, level and comparatively clean streets of the Korean capital. Seoul has not made notable advance in the line of public buildings. The beautiful and classic, though severe, lines of the Roman Catholic cathedral dominate the town from the architectural standpoint. The French, English and Russian legation buildings are imposing enough, but they are not conspicuous. Almost all the Korean government buildings are still in the pure Korean style. Some little use has been made of brick and corrugated iron, but the effect is not pleasing. The two styles do not harmonise. The

crude, cheap foreign buildings of the Chinese merchants are incongruous with the general tone of Korean buildings, above which they tower in all the blankness of brick and mortar. The Japanese have everywhere preserved the tinder-box character of their architecture. Some of them are beginning to use brick and stone, and the general tendency seems to be in the direction of more solid and enduring forms of architecture.

Foreign residence is gravitating toward the hills between the city wall and the river, three miles away. The time is approaching when we shall have here a quarter corresponding to the "Bluff" in Yokohama or the "Hill" in Kobe. These hills form an ideal place for foreign residence. They are high, well wooded and conveniently situated, and soon a second line of electric tramway between Seoul and the river will make these suburban places easily accessible at all times.

The problems of proper water-supply and sewerage are still to be solved. An American syndicate are arranging to put in a good system of water-works, and until that is done little can be accomplished in the way of sewerage.

As for passenger transportation, Seoul has made more advance than the average port in the Far East. The American-Korean Electric Company operates about nine miles of surface road on the trolley system. It is a distinct success. The Koreans are good patrons of the road, and the numbers carried have increased steadily from the very start. The employees are largely Koreans, both in the power house and on the line everywhere. It is the unanimous opinion of the Americans who operate the road, that the Koreans make competent hands in every department of the work. They have almost displaced Japanese both as mechanicians and overseers. This is a striking testimonial, and one that should have weight in settling the question whether, as so many foreigners seem to think, the Korean is incapable of attaining proficiency in the field of applied science.

The same company supplies electric light to all and sundry, but as yet there are very few municipal lights in the streets.

RESIDENCE OF THE AMERICAN CONSUL-GENERAL

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Each Korean is supposed to hang out a lamp at night. These serve at least to make the darkness visible.

Korean high officials still cling to their four-man chairs, but the middle-class officials have taken kindly to the jinrikisha, a vehicle which has come into use only during the last five or six years.

I have mentioned the railroads as being the greatest material improvement yet instituted in Korea, opening, as they do, great tracts of farming land which were formerly almost closed to the world, because of the difficulties of transportation; but another important step has been taken in the erection of a large number of lighthouses along the dangerous coast of the peninsula. This has been undertaken by the Imperial Customs, and is being pushed vigorously. Its importance can hardly be overestimated. The dangerous nature of the coast is well shown by the fact that it has been deemed necessary to build over thirty lighthouses. Many more than half of these are on the shorter western coast.

Late years have developed a fairly efficient postal system, and Korea is a member of the International Postal Union. The system has proved an unmixed blessing to the Koreans, although it has always shown a large deficit at the end of the year. The Japanese have now taken over all postal and telegraph offices, and it may be that their efficiency will be largely increased.

One encouraging feature of all these changes is that the Koreans accept them gladly and make free use of them. They are quick to see the advantage of quick communication.

But with all the beginnings that have already been made toward a higher economic life, it must be confessed that as yet they are only beginnings. The commercial centres are as yet objects of wonder to the countryman, and the new life has hardly taken hold of the masses. Nor will it do so until education has laid its beneficent hand upon them and the standard of civic morals has been greatly elevated. These things are of greater immediate importance than economic progress, for upon them

depend the ultimate benefits of such progress. Until justice is again blindfolded, and a man can secure redress for wrongs and be secure in the enjoyment of the results of his own labour, railroads, telegraphs and postal facilities can be only added instruments of oppression.

Special emphasis should be laid upon the forward movement of missions along eleemosynary lines. The well-equipped Severance Memorial Hospital has been lately completed and is doing a work of untold value. The munificence of friends in America has also resulted in the erection and equipment of excellent foreign hospitals in Fusan and Pyeng-Yang. The Young Men's Christian Association is erecting, by the munificence of Mr. John Wanamaker, a handsome and commodious building in Seoul, where the association has made surprising advances and bids fair to prove an elevating instrument of enormous potency. Rapid advancement is being made along the line of publication, and the present plan of coöperation between the different Protestant missions promises large returns in every field of moral, intellectual and social activity.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE FUTURE OF KOREA

IT will be seen from the foregoing chapters, especially those in which the actions of Japan have been traced, why I name this book "The Passing of Korea." Japan by a series of successful wars has secured a position from which she can dictate to Korea. That this is satisfactory to any of the other treaty powers can hardly be believed. They acquiesce in it for personal convenience. There are very cogent reasons why the arrangement should be distasteful to British, German and American merchants. This point is worth careful study. The forced agreement of last November included a clause in which Japan promised to carry out the terms of the treaties between Korea and the other powers. Now these treaties guarantee to the subjects of the different governments extraterritorial rights in Korea. They are under the legal jurisdiction of their own consular authorities. These treaties also fix, in a general way, the amount of customs duties to be levied on foreign imports. It is clear that these two things are of great importance to American and other foreign trade in the peninsula; but since the conclusion of the so-called "agreement" of November some of the leading Japanese papers have strongly advocated the setting aside of the extraterritorial rights of foreigners in Korea, on the ground that this will facilitate the establishment of uniform courts of justice. These papers must think that the powers interested are so impressed by Japanese military successes that any proposals she may broach will be acceded to without opposition, — an opinion in which the attitude of the American government certainly tends to confirm them. How otherwise would semi-official organs of

the Japanese government venture the wild proposal to break another of Japan's recent promises?

Japan began and carried through this whole matter by the clever use of misinformation and broken promises, which successfully hoodwinked the American public. For this reason I urge with all the power at my command that the course of events should be carefully watched by those who are interested in the preservation of the principle of an open door in the Orient, and the preservation of rights which, though only partially utilised as yet, are full of potentialities for the future; and I urge that immediate steps be taken to forestall the concession to Japan, by the executive department of our government, of the right to dominate the persons and the interests of American citizens in Korea.

My belief that vigilance is necessary is based upon the following consideration. The treaty-making power is vested in Congress and not in the executive. The latter cannot add a single word to a treaty between the United States and a foreign power. It follows that the executive cannot abrogate, or drop a single word from, an existing treaty. Is it not pertinent, then, to ask by what authority our treaty obligations to Korea were so summarily impaired? If the clause by which we guarantee to use our good offices to help Korea in case she is oppressed can be ignored by our executive officials, why should they not be able to turn over our nationals to Japanese jurisdiction or consent to a change in Korean customs tariffs which would kill our promising trade? This would be only a natural outcome of the manifest tendency of our executive to assume legislative functions. The trouble is that Americans do not realise that the tender feeling of Japan toward us politically is based upon the fact that we are giving her every opportunity to kill us commercially in the Far East.

But even the establishment of a protectorate by Japan would not necessarily mean the certain destruction of Korean nationality if it were carried out along internationally legal lines. Japanese statesmen who are supposed to represent the real feelings of the

Japan government announce that Korea has not been annexed but is still a separate state. There is one fact which belies this statement, and shows conclusively that Korea can never become an autonomous power except through some great international cataclysm which is not at present contemplated. This fact is that Japan manifestly intends to allow Korea to be filled with Japanese subjects, and so rapidly, that within a decade they shall form a body strong enough to hold Korea in the event of an armed protest on the part of the Korean people. This enormous inrush of Japanese is not the result of a glut of labour or a lack of opportunity in Japan, for, as has been recently shown in a most illuminating book,[1] the arable land in Japan is but half utilised. The present deplorable famine in that country, which has called forth the laudable sympathy of Americans, was doubtless greatly aggravated, if it was not actually caused, by the rush of able-bodied workmen to Korea, where, partially freed from the restraints of their strict police surveillance, they could reap golden harvests by taking advantage of the helplessness of the Koreans. This is the darkest cloud which overhangs Korea, and it is one that has no silver lining. Thus it is that Korea is taking her place in line with Poland, Armenia and the Congo "Free" State.

The question arises, what should Korea do under these circumstances? What can she reasonably do to preserve from extinction the people who form the nation? There is only one answer. She must bend herself to the task of educating the people up to a point where they can prove themselves the equals of their conquerors and, by the very force of genuine manhood, exert an influence which shall counteract the contempt which the Japanese feel. This may not avail, for the Japanese are slow to show respect to any form of ability which cannot be measured in terms of military or brute force. To-day, in spite of America's intellectual achievements, the Japanese are laughing in their sleeves at us, because they think we are afraid of them; what, then, must they think of the Korean?

[1] *The New Far East*, by Thomas F. Millard.

Baron Kaneko, in his campaign of education in America, told us that Japan intended to colonise largely in Korea, but that she would discourage intimate relations between the two peoples, — that she would consider the Koreans a "lower race." Significant words these, which should be put alongside the specious protestations of Japanese statesmen that Koreans are to be humanely treated.

Every day brings news of the existence of a surprising and hitherto unguessed-at warmth of feeling for their country on the part of Koreans. This has given the lie to those special pleaders for Japan who have denied the existence of patriotism in Korea, and gives promise of a determination to do whatever may be done to weld the Korean people into a peaceful but intelligent and prosperous body which even the Japanese will be slow to stigmatise as contemptible.

As to the agencies at hand for the carrying on of this important work, a few words here will not be out of place. Without doubt the most powerful agency will be the American missionaries now resident in Korea. Not even the Japanese can openly object to any efforts that are put forth for the elevation of the intellectual and moral condition of that people, and there are special reasons for believing that only those who can speak the language, and thus can get near to the Korean heart, will be able to carry out a thorough consistent and continuous plan for the vindication of Korea's claim to intellectual capacity. The missionaries are set apart from all political complications, and their efforts for Korea can affect political affairs only as a stiffening of Korea's moral fibre and a thorough awakening of her dormant intellectual life shall make inevitable her reinstatement in the regard of the Japanese themselves.

In this great work the American people ought to be deeply interested, and with it they should be more closely identified than by an occasional word of sympathy. If there is any nation on earth that deserves the active and substantial aid of the American people that nation is Korea. We were the first Western power

to conclude a treaty with her, and in making that treaty we guaranteed to keep a watchful eye upon her safety and interests. For twenty-five years American representatives and other residents in Korea reiterated the statement that we stood for the "square deal," for the ascendency of right as against mere brute force, and Korea had a right to regard our government as the one above all others which would demur at any encroachment upon her independence. But when the time of difficulty approached and America's disinterested friendship was to be called upon to prove the genuineness of its oft-repeated protestations, we deserted her with such celerity, such cold-heartedness and such a refinement of contempt that the blood of every decent American citizen in Korea boiled with indignation. While the most loyal, cultured and patriotic Koreans were committing suicide one after the other because they would not survive the death of their country, the American Minister was toasting the perpetrators of the outrage in bumpers of champagne; utterly callous to the death throes of an empire which had treated American citizens with a courtesy and consideration they had enjoyed in no other Oriental country.

How can we, the American people, prove to the Koreans that we were not accessory to this act which was so contrary to the principles we have professed to hold? There is only one way, — by helping them to the one thing that will enable them to hold together as a nation, and give them time and opportunity to prove the falsity of the libellous statements that have been so freely circulated, and which have temporarily alienated the good-will of so many of our people. That one thing is education. The Koreans have awakened to the fact that this, which should have been their first consideration many years ago, is now their last resort, and they are clamouring for education. I believe there are thousands of Koreans who will open their purses and subscribe generously to the funds required for this great work. Much is already being done by the various missions, but it is necessarily circumscribed and cramped by the lack of funds.

What is needed is a wide-spread and thorough canvass of the entire empire for the purpose of getting the subject rightly before the Korean people. There would be nothing in this suggestive of opposition to Japan. On the contrary, every effort should be expended with special reference to coöperation with whatever plans the dominant power may have formed for common school education. Korea can gain nothing by holding back and offering to the plans of Japan a sulky resistance. They are face to face with a definite condition, and theories as to the morality of the forces which brought about the condition are wholly academic. My discussion of these forces in the foregoing pages is partly by way of record and partly to awaken the American people to the duty which lies upon them. The Koreans need help in establishing such a system as I have hinted at above. They will do all they can, but the question arises whether generous-minded people in America will come to the aid of the Koreans and give their personal services or financial support to such a movement. Is there any man or body of men in this country who will seize the opportunity to found in the city of Seoul an institution of learning which shall be the nucleus, the rallying-ground, of a great national movement? It is the opinion of those most conversant with the feeling of the Korean people that there is no other place in the world where money invested in education will bring larger, surer or more beneficent results.

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